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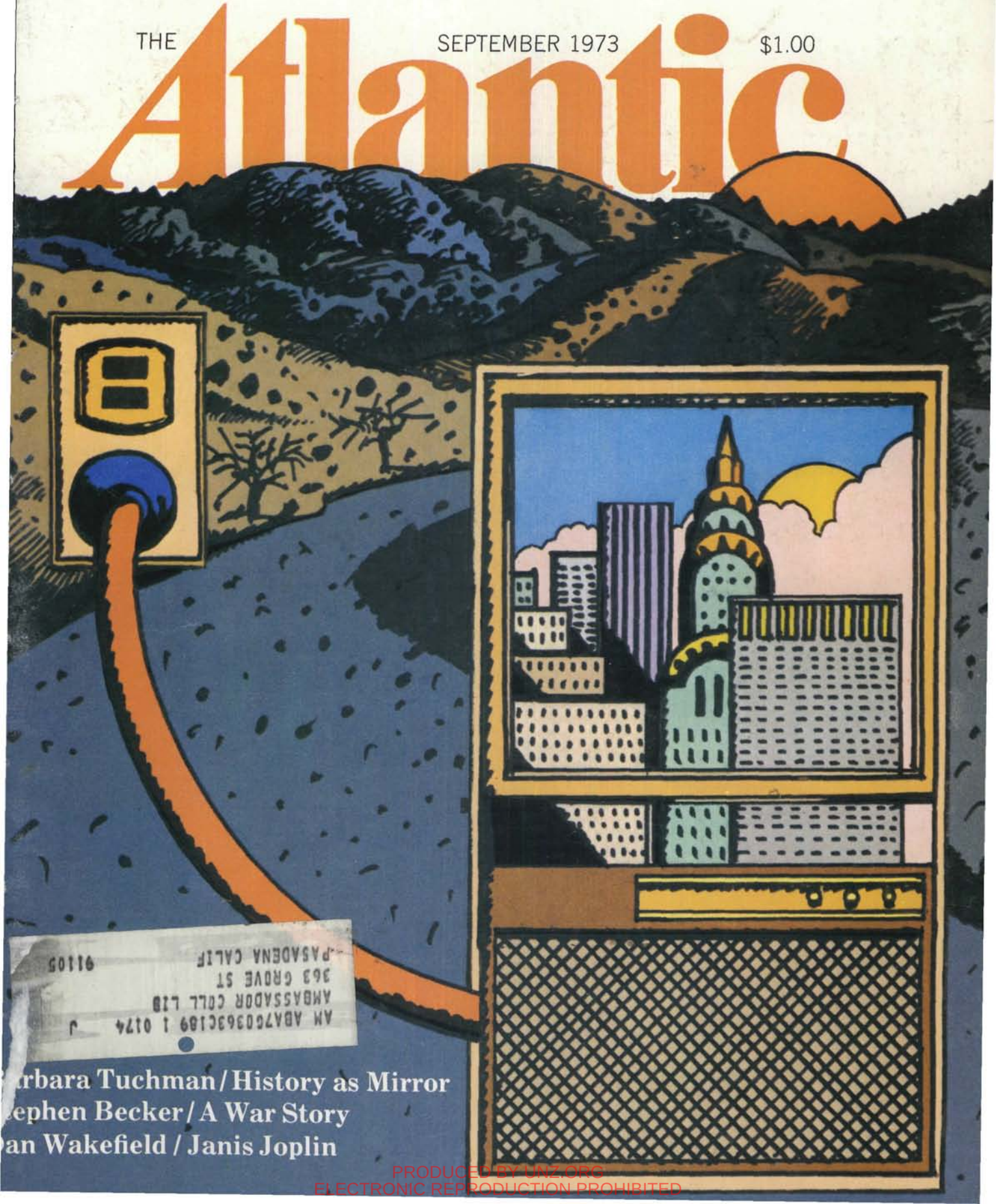

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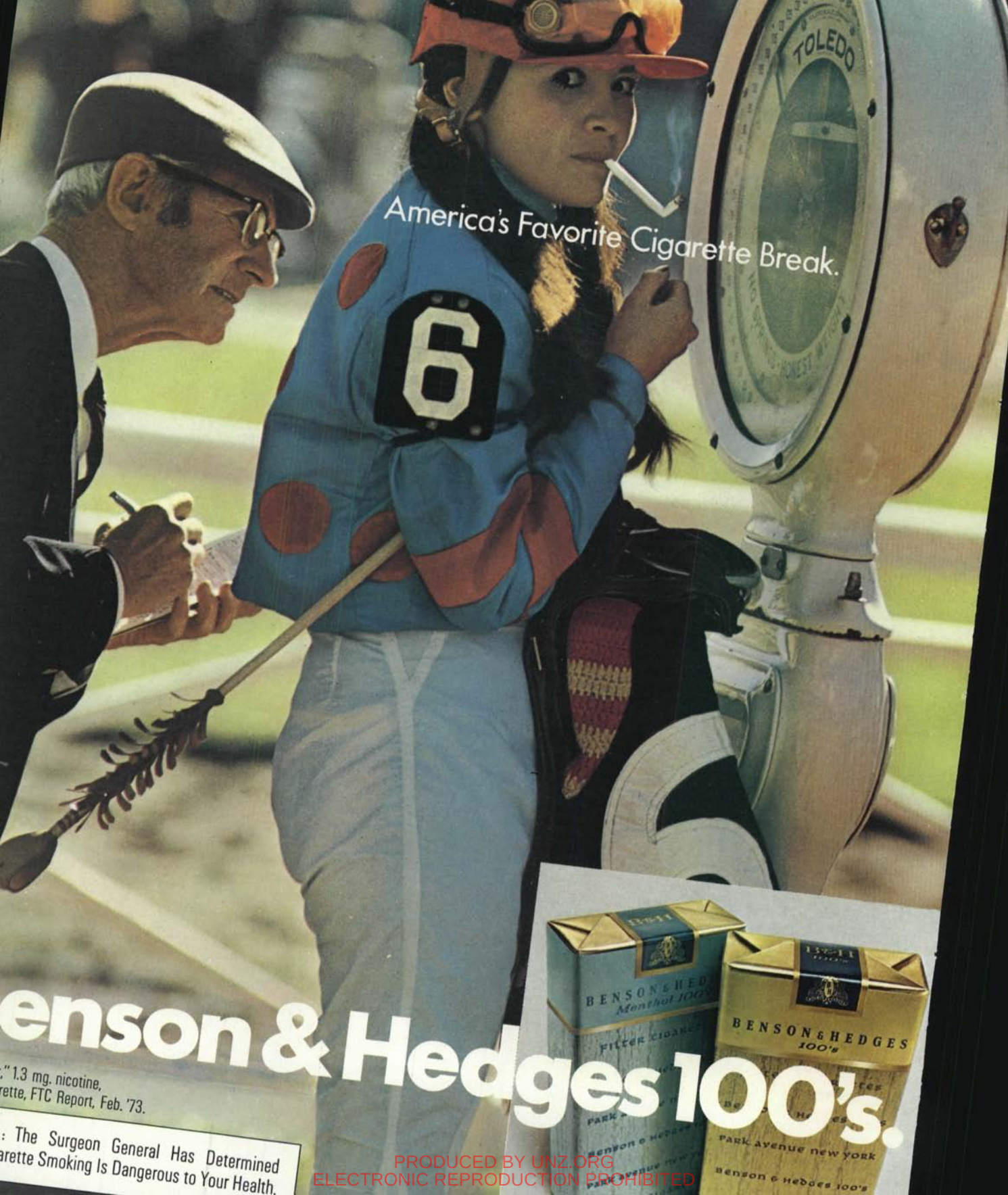

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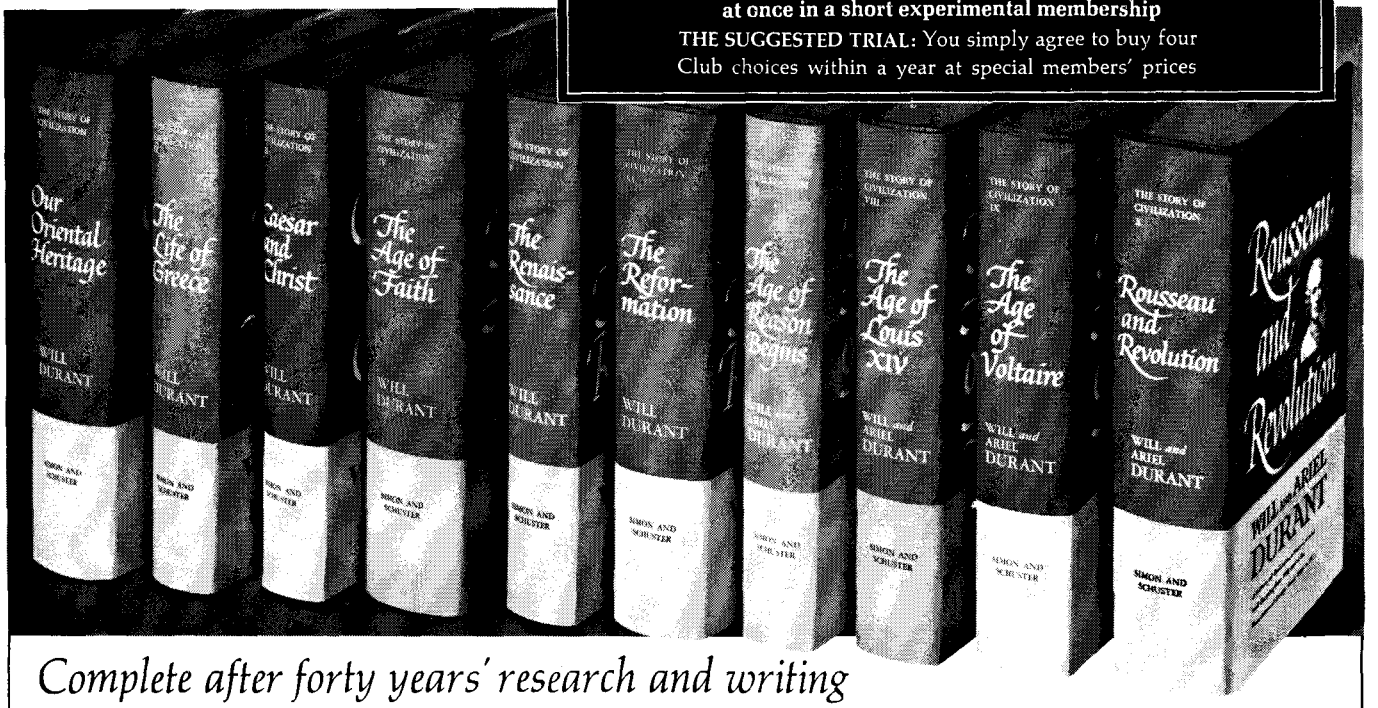

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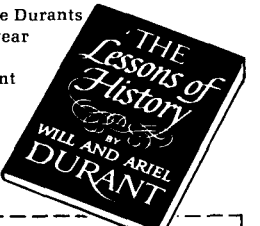

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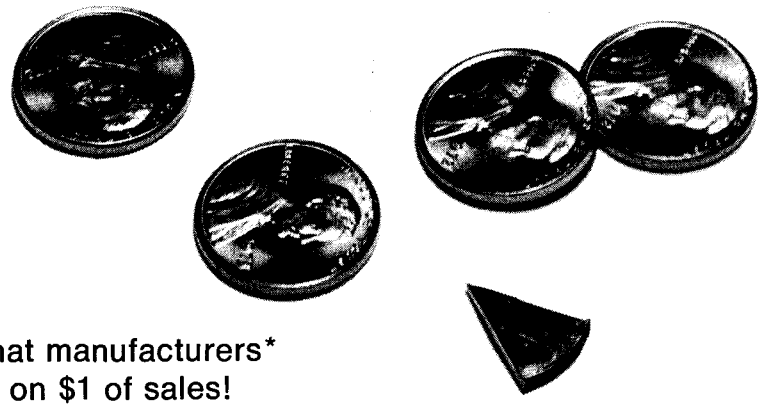

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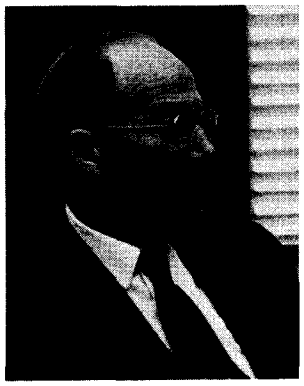

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An opinion survey on profits was conducted in 1971 by Opinion Research Corporation, Princeton, N.J. If you would like to have more details of this survey, write . . . Bethlehem Steel Corporation, Public Affairs Department, Bethlehem, PA 18016.

*Based on most recent (1971) figures in 1972 Statistical Abstract of the United States on average U.S. manufacturing corporation profits after taxes.

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SEPTEMBER 1973 VOLUME 232 NO. 3

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THE EDITOR'S PAGE

What with Secretariat, the storybook horse, getting so much attention for his Triple Crown victories and his purchase by a syndicate for $6 million, remind me someday to tell about another thoroughbred and the syndicate of toffs that took a spin with him not so many years ago. This syndicate was made up of none like the nabobs, industrialists, heiresses, and scions who have staked several ransoms on Secretariat's untried prowess as a stud. There were only four of us—two American newsmen and an American magazine photographer based in London and an English adman possessed of a boulevardier's aplomb and the full confidence of a turf accountant. In Britain in the late 1950s, the pound sterling was worth a relatively robust $2.80, and it cost all of $28 a week to maintain a thoroughbred in full training.

"Why not," said one of us over a second or third Connaught martini one day, "buy our own racehorse?" Why not?, the others chorused, and before we let common sense intrude, two of us were on our way to the autumn yearling sales at Newmarket. Each, knowing himself to be prudent and the other to be impetuous, exacted from the other the vow to study the auction catalogue carefully, to show restraint, to move carefully, to resist seeming bargains until the auctioneer's chant had led us to the one creature in the catalogue that seemed most to combine the characteristics (speed, staying power, and most of all, cheapness) that met the standards of the syndicate.

Before us in the stables and the paddocks stood more than three hundred yearlings, each, to our amateur's eyes, as beautiful as the next. First into the ring came a bay colt, foaled April 6, 1958, sired by a well-known South African horse named Wilwyn out of a dam named Dido. "Why, I photographed that colt's father when he won the Laurel International," the photographer exclaimed. "A good omen!" That settled it. The very first horse sold at Newmarket on that morning in October of 1958 was knocked down for £325 ($910) and was shortly thereafter registered and insured in the name of the four toffs. Back in his stall, the colt showed only diffidence. "Looks a bit peaked, doesn't he," the photographer murmured.

"You're the one who talked about the good omen," said his companion.

"It's too early for recriminations," said the photographer, and reached a handful of sugar cubes toward the beast's muzzle. The horse consumed them as if he hadn't eaten a square meal for several days which, in fact, was the case. "The man owned him's been behind on his feed bills," a stableboy explained.

Back in London, the owners had little difficulty arriving at an apt name for their prize: Fourflusher. As for silks, the Anglo-American compromise was obvious: red, white, and blue, the colors of *both* flags at the Battle of Yorktown. After dourly observing Fourflusher's overlong legs, an experienced trainer with a good spread at Epsom Downs agreed to prepare him for his career.

Progress was encouraging. Fourflusher filled out nicely under the trainer's ministrations. The trainer, not given to effusiveness, confessed to a suspicion that "the horse can go a bit" and recommended that he be entered at a one-day meet at Folkestone—not exactly Ascot, Deauville, or Saratoga, but still a proper racetrack. The February day dawned clear, and the racing pages of the morning newspapers unanimously touted Fourflusher as favorite for his race. What excitement! The Syndicate reached out its Onassis-like tentacles, to friends, relatives, office boys, messengers, to cadge resources for a grand on-the-nose bet.

All assemble at Folkestone. A grand day, though a tout bearing a book of form sheets incites fleeting concern by muttering, as he sizes up Fourflusher in the paddock, "Cor, with legs *that* long he'll fall over at the first turn." The photographer, having been the one to know the creature's father, gets the honor of entering the owner's circle and whispering to the jockey the long-planned syndicate instructions: "Win! Any way you can."

Jockeys up. The procession onto the track, as pretty a sight as Dufy ever painted. The starter's rope jerks up. They're off! Fourflusher's in front as if shot from The Great Gonzaga's cannon. At two furlongs, he still lopes in front. But then, a sickening sight, suggestive of air brakes being applied to a London double-decker. Thirty seconds later, it is all over. Fourflusher has hung on for third, good for £5 of the purse.

It was the highpoint of his career. In the months to come, the horse ran six more races, always with that incredible burst in the first 440 yards and then the imitation of Shakespeare's schoolboy creeping on to school. For altogether amiable reasons, the syndicate broke up, sold Fourflusher for only $60 less than it had paid for him. Fourflusher went off to Malaya to race some more, while the toffs went their various ways, each sharing in the glory of having once owned one of the fastest two-furlong racehorses in England and, who knows?, all the world. Remind me to tell about that someday.

Robert Manning

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REPORTS & COMMENT

RWANDA AND BURUNDI

The enormity and horror of it all are exposed by what a visitor does not see in Bujumbura. Bujumbura, a languid, colorless, nondescript town on Lake Tanganyika, is the capital of Burundi, a central African nub of a country in which 85 percent of the population is Hutu. Yet a visitor can find few Hutus in Bujumbura. It is a little like entering Warsaw after World War II and looking for Jews. A visitor would not need a tour of Treblinka to know that something terrible had happened.

In Burundi, something terrible *has* happened. A year ago, the government, run by the minority Tutsi tribe, tried to eliminate, in a chilling and systematic way, the entire elite class of the Hutu people—all those with some education, government jobs, or money. The death toll was perhaps one hundred thousand, perhaps as great as two hundred thousand. Since then there has been even more killing, the latest in May and June of this year.

The troubles have also devastated a good deal of the south of the country. On the road to Nyanza Lac, near the Tanzanian border, many homes are deserted. Almost half the classrooms and two-thirds of the clinics are destroyed. The coffee bushes, the main crop of Burundi, are overgrown and untended. A visitor hardly sees a commercial truck anymore.

Nyanza Lac itself, once an administrative center with a population of twenty thousand, now looks like an unused movie set for an old Western. Arab traders sit in front of a few shops, but most are closed. Several, in fact, are in a shambles. The main grocery sells only margarine, tomato paste, canned mackerel, soft drinks, and beer. The school, the Catholic mission, the dispensary, the customs office are closed. The houses where French foreign-aid technicians once lived are stripped bare. Burundi officials say that two thousand people now live in Nyanza Lac, but a visitor cannot find them.

The slaughter that accompanied this devastation was not an isolated outburst in the history of this part of the world. It was only more and worse than what has happened before. There has been mass tribal killing in Burundi and its neighbor Rwanda for more than a decade, the killing in one provoking the killing in the other. The scene of the bloodshed, in fact, moved to Rwanda in the first months of this year. There is no end in sight.

The latest slaughter in Burundi was ignited by Hutu refugees who crossed the borders from Rwanda and Tanzania in the middle of May to avenge last year's massacres and overthrow the Tutsi government. Though the Hutus failed, the frightened Tutsi government ordered all Tutsis to undergo military training. Tutsi youths organized patrols to guard Bujumbura, now a Tutsi city, from the Hutu countryside. And soldiers and young vigilantes began reprisals against Hutus living outside the city.

It is not clear how many Hutus have died in the latest slaughter. But thirty-eight thousand new refugees had fled to Tanzania by the end of June. Many showed up with panga (machete) wounds, some infested with maggots. Some died from their wounds there in refugee camps. A Catholic priest, Father Ramon Vincens, who works near the Tanzania-Burundi border, quoted Hutu refugees as telling him that the program of genocide against the Hutus was "worse than the one last year."

Contemporary feudalism

Burundi and its neighbor Rwanda represent extreme cases of the failure of traditional African institutions to adapt to the extraordinary and swift changes of modern Africa. Each about the size of Maryland, each with almost four million people, Burundi and Rwanda are the most densely populated countries in Africa and among the poorest in the world. Their people graze cattle and farm on the verdant hills along Lake Kivu and Lake Tanganyika. The histories and traditions of the peoples of both countries are similar.

More than four hundred years ago, the Tutsi people (better known by the African plural, Watutsi) came down to Rwanda and Burundi from the north, probably Ethiopia. They were cattle farmers, probably Hamitic, with slender features and skin somewhat lighter than that of most other Africans. The Tutsis were tall, some well over six feet.

Rwanda and Burundi were al-

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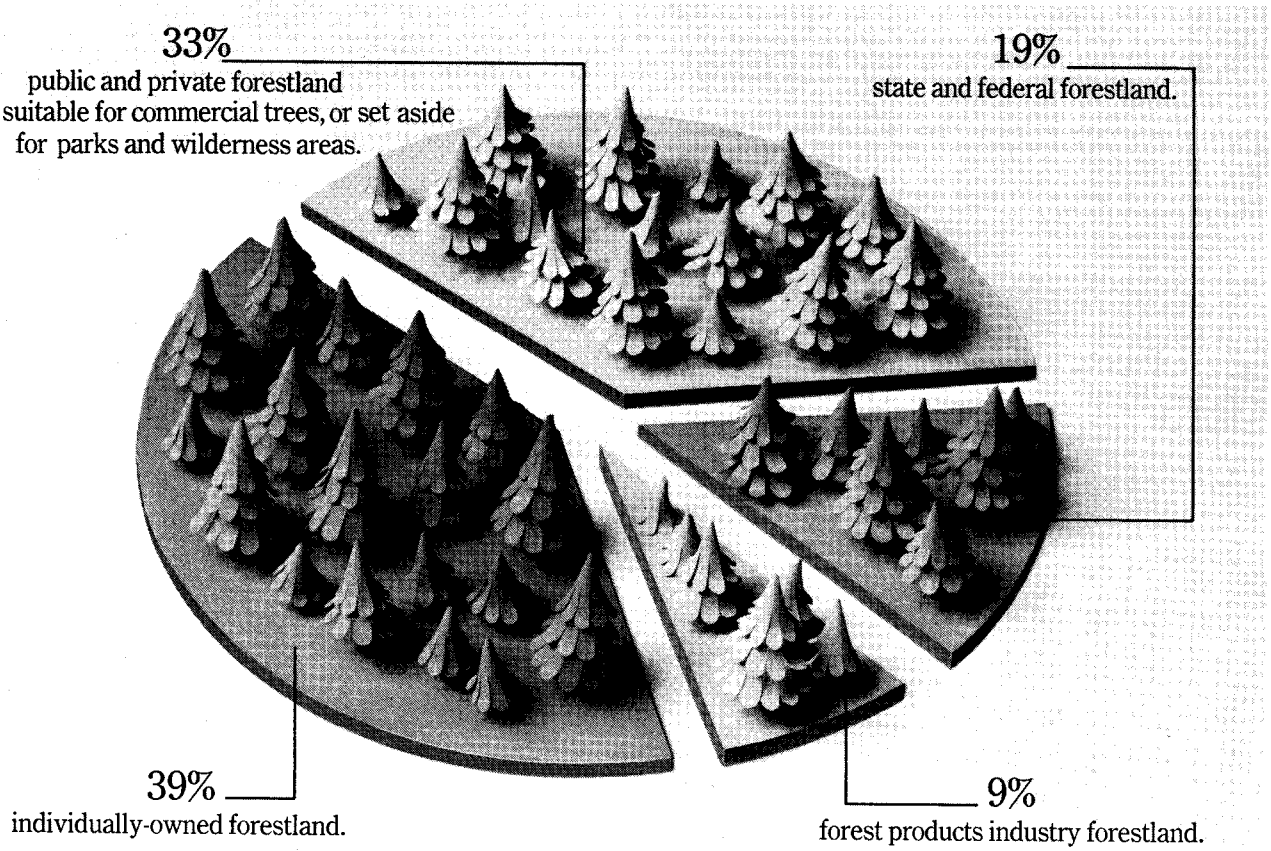
The American forest still belongs to the American people.



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Source: Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service.

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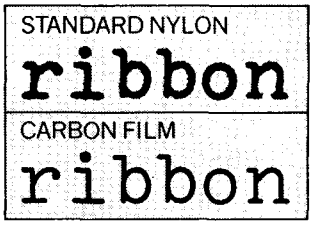

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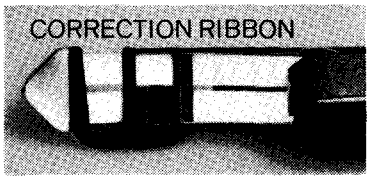

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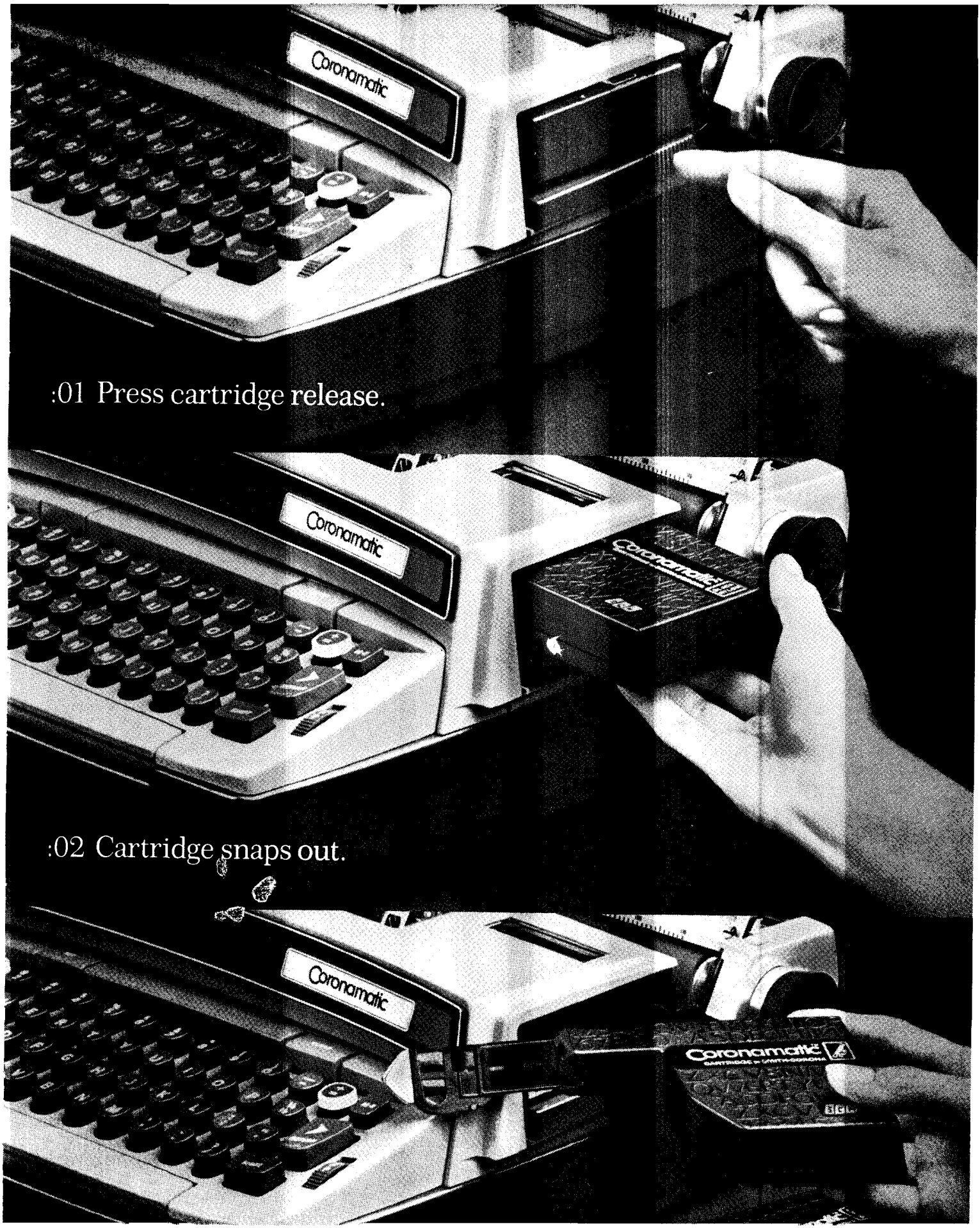

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ready inhabited then by a few pygmies and by many Hutu people, farmers who lived by their hoes. They were Bantu people, short, stocky, dark, with negroid features.

Over the years, the small group of Tutsi immigrants subjugated the masses of Hutus into a kind of feudal system. Much as in medieval Europe, a pyramid developed with Tutsi lords giving their own loyalty to more important Tutsi lords in exchange for protection. A Mwami, or Tutsi king, ruled at the top of the pyramid in each country. There were variations to the basic feudal scheme, but one thing was clear: centuries of tradition made the Tutsis feel like a privileged, superior people and the Hutus feel like a subjugated, inferior people.

Many of the ideas generated during the era of independence in Black Africa challenged the feudal structure of Rwanda and Burundi. Only 15 percent of the population in Burundi and 10 percent in Rwanda, the Tutsis began to feel deep fears about their place in societies where power might go to the majority. The Hutus' feeling of inferiority and the Tutsis' fears probably account for most of the terrible bloodshed in the last decade.

Eliminating opposition

The first troubles took place in Rwanda. In early 1961, the Hutu leaders, with the connivance of Belgian colonial officials, overthrew the Mwami of Rwanda. Rwanda became independent in 1962 as a republic run by Hutus. This revolution was accompanied by continual persecution of the Tutsi minority which reached its peak in 1963 and 1964. It is probable that since the Mwami of Rwanda was overthrown the Hutus have killed more than twenty thousand Tutsis and forced two hundred thousand to take refuge in neighboring Uganda, Zaire, and Burundi.

Unlike Rwanda, Burundi became independent in 1962 as a kingdom, with a Mwami still ruling. He lasted only four years, and was overthrown in 1966 not by Hutus but by Tutsi army officers from a non-royal clan led by Michel Micombero, now Burundi's President. Since independence, Hutu rebels have tried to take over Burundi in various coups, plots, and uprisings. Each attempt has been met by Tutsi reprisals. The worst reprisal came last year after the most serious Hutu uprising.

The killings began in late April, 1972, reached their height in May, and ended, more or less, by August. Many Tutsis killed because they had been frightened by the Hutu uprising, in which a few thousand Tutsis died. But it would be misleading to blame the massacre of Hutus on a savage frenzy of Tutsi fear. There was some wild, indiscriminate killing—the devastation in the south is proof of that. But most Hutus were wiped out in a cold and calculated way by a Tutsi government that seemed to feel that it could guarantee itself power for at least another decade by eliminating all potential leaders of the majority tribe. The repression was far out of proportion to the provocation.

According to most sources, the government had lists of intended victims. "I know some Hutus," said an American, "who begged Tutsi friends in the government to check the lists to see if they were on it." The lists were not exclusive. One source said a Tutsi official tried to reassure the wife of a missing Hutu by showing her a government list without her husband's name on it. But he had been killed anyway.

In Bujumbura, many victims were killed in prison. "We kept sending food to my Hutu secretary in prison," said a diplomat, "until one day they told us not to bother anymore." There are all kinds of grisly stories about the methods of execution, all difficult to verify. But most sources agree with a diplomat who said, "They did not use many bullets."

The bodies were thrown on trucks and driven from the city to a field near the airport. In the first few days, the trucks rumbled through town in daylight. But the government later decided to try to hide what it was doing. The trucks were shifted to night runs. But that did not hide very much. "We were driving home one evening behind a truck," a Belgian woman recalled, "when my little boy asked me what was that inside the truck. They were bodies, piled up and tangled, some hanging over. It was terrible." Under bright lighting, bulldozers dug mass graves at night and covered them over.

There seemed to be three kinds of victims. First, the government tried to kill almost every Hutu who had a government job, including Hutu soldiers. Many of the death lists were simply lifted from civil service rolls. Second, the government tried to kill all Hutus who had enough wealth for potential leadership. Wealth is a very relative term in Africa. Many sources say that the so-called wealthy Hutus were any who owned a shop, had a bank account, or lived in a house with a corrugated iron roof instead of a thatched one. Finally, the government tried to kill all educated Hutus. Almost all Hutu university students, many Hutu secondary school students, and perhaps half the country's Hutu teachers were killed. In one incident, six women teachers were killed in front of their students. The categories of victims explain why a visitor sees hardly any Hutus inside Bujumbura but will see many trudging along the road, with hoes on their shoulders, in the countryside.

Sometimes it is difficult for an outsider to understand how the government was able to inflict so much punishment on the Hutus. They outnumbered the Tutsis almost six to one. Yet the Hutus were cowed by an army that numbered no more than four thousand at the start of the troubles and far less after it purged itself of Hutus. Seventy-five thousand Hutus fled Burundi and took refuge in Zaire, Tanzania, and Rwanda. But the great mass of Hutus remained behind and took their punishment without much resistance.

Although many Hutus were taken from their homes, there are stories of others simply accepting summonses and reporting to the police at the scheduled time even though they knew that death awaited them. There are other stories of officials loading Hutus on trucks and, when the trucks were full, ordering the remaining Hutus to come back the next day. The Hutus obeyed. One Hutu Cabinet member was overseas when the troubles erupted yet flew home to his execution.

Some observers say that even Hutus trying to escape did so half-

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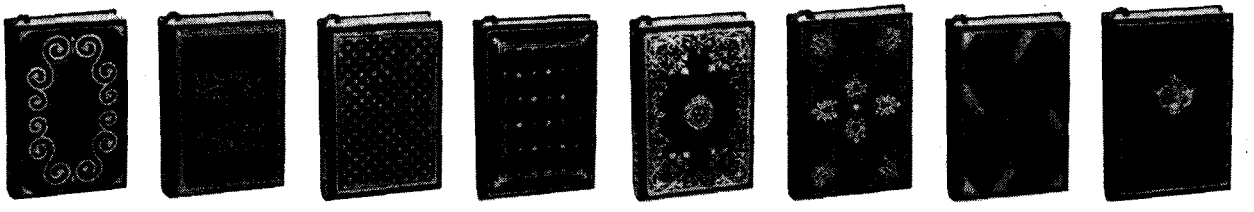

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heartedly. "They were pathetic," said one foreigner who has worked with Hutus for many years. "Any kid with a third-grade education in the United States has read enough funny books to know how to escape. But they would walk to the border down the main road. If one gendarme stopped them, they would turn back." After centuries of psychological dependence on their Tutsi lords, the Hutus did as they were told, even if the order meant their death.

"Only the guilty . . ."

The government does not deny that great killing took place, but it has issued a self-serving interpretation of the events. According to an official white paper, a force of twenty-five thousand Hutus, many led by former Congolese rebels called Mulelists, attacked Burundi in April, 1972, and massacred fifty thousand Tutsis in an attempted genocide of the Tutsi people. The government put down the revolt and executed those responsible: "Only the guilty have been punished," President Micombero said. "The innocent were not troubled at all." The government's version of the events is rejected by all foreign sources in Bujumbura as grossly exaggerating the original Hutu attack and hiding the horror of the repression.

It was inevitable that the massacres in Burundi would unleash the pent-up resentment of Hutus for their former Tutsi lords in neighboring Rwanda. The resentment was exacerbated there by the Hutu failures since independence. Their economy was stagnant, going nowhere. Because of years of privilege and education, the Tutsis still had a disproportionate share of jobs in the private economy and places in secondary schools and the University of Rwanda. With these frustrations, it was natural for Hutu politicians, who face elections later this year, to play on the resentment against Tutsis in Rwanda.

In the first months of this year, Hutus have forced private employers to dismiss their Tutsi workers and have frightened Tutsi students away from the university and secondary schools. There has been rioting and murder of Tutsis on the hills in the countryside, though not on the scale of the earlier massacres in Rwanda or of the slaughter of Hutus in Burundi last year. Foreign sources in Kigali, the capital of Rwanda, put this year's death toll at somewhere between 750 and 3000.

At the University of Rwanda at Butare, a list appeared on the bulletin board demanding the expulsion of seventeen Tutsi students. Hutu students formed tribunals to check the bloodline of other students to determine who was really Tutsi. Bands of Hutus roamed the campus and town looking for Tutsi students, smashing those they found with iron bars. In the end, 175 Tutsis, half the university's total enrollment, fled the campus.

The university administration posted a notice pointing out that, by its charter, the university was open to all qualified students regardless of race, sex, social origin, language, politics, or philosophical opinion. But Hutu students scrawled the words "Not possible for Tutsis" across this notice.

The emotion and lack of reason in the situation were demonstrated a few weeks later when three foreign correspondents asked a group of Hutu students on campus to explain the "several reasons" for expelling the Tutsis. The students waved their hands wildly at the correspondents and shouted, "Reasons . . . reasons . . . reasons!" at them. They refused to answer any more questions and ordered the journalists' taxi driver to take them away.

Rwanda's troubles finally triggered a coup in July this year. Like most Rwandan soldiers, General Juvenal Habyarimana, the army commander and Minister of Defense who took over the government, was a northern Hutu. Since northern Rwanda was not conquered by the Tutsis until well into the twentieth century, northerners look on themselves as more militantly Hutu and less tainted by Tutsi intermarriage than southern Hutus. For years, northerners have complained that the southern-dominated government was not doing enough to keep the Tutsis down. That attitude may have been a major reason for the coup.

In Burundi, the Tutsis are still not safely in power. Like the whites in Rhodesia or South Africa, they are vastly outnumbered. While the massacres last year may have weakened the Hutus, it also may have made them more political, more resentful, and more eager for revenge. As this year's border incursions show, this may be especially true of Hutu refugees. These incursions, in fact, have angered the Burundians and led to skirmishes between Burundian and Tanzanian soldiers at the border this year.

Whimpers

One of the strangest sides to all the bloodshed between the Tutsis and Hutus has been the feeble reaction of the rest of the world. Last year's slaughter in Burundi must rank with the most terrible in history. Yet Christian missionaries kept quiet or muted their concern. Most foreign governments, including the United States, refused to protest in public at the time. Two African countries, Zaire and Tanzania, even rushed military help to the government that was doing the killing. Almost all foreign aid continued to flow into Burundi. European businessmen kept playing golf in Bujumbura.

It is not difficult to imagine the outcry in the world today if the whites who run the government of South Africa had decided to put down a rebellion and guarantee their control by killing all black South Africans with any education, wealth, or potential for leadership. Yet the events in Burundi provoked only a few whimpers of protest.

Missionaries and other religious leaders showed the most surprising restraint, for in the past they have been in the forefront of those exposing injustice in Africa to the rest of the world. In Burundi, one of the most Christian countries in Africa, missionaries were afraid that if they spoke out they might lose their hold. Silence was the price they had to pay, they felt, to expand Christianity in Burundi.

An American Protestant missionary reluctantly granted an interview early this year. He said that Protestant missionaries were in a precarious position in Burundi. Government leaders, who are mostly

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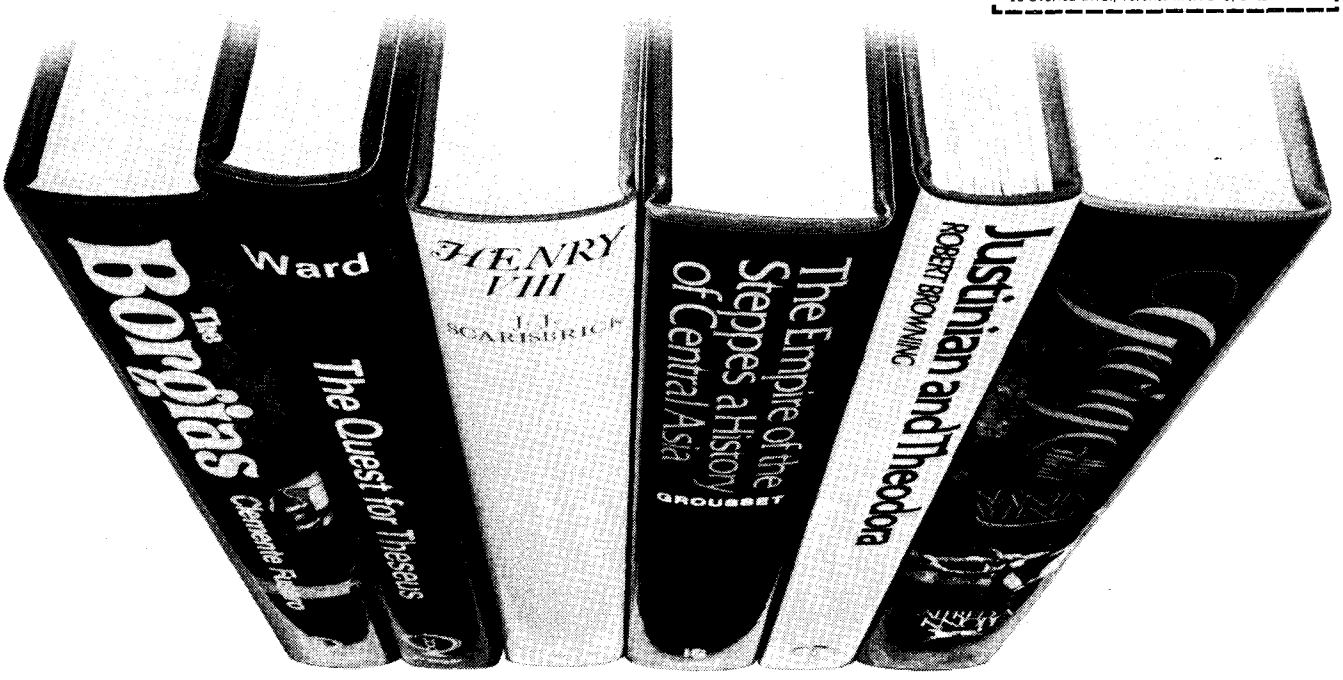

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Catholic, suspect them of stirring up trouble among the Hutus. He paid tribute to the American Embassy in Bujumbura for trying to keep stories about the massacres away from the American press. He said that if the news had been splashed in American newspapers, the Burundi government might have blamed the one hundred American Protestant missionaries and expelled them.

Yet, a few minutes later, he complained that the rest of the world had ignored what had happened in Burundi. How could he praise the American Embassy for withholding the news and then lament the fact that foreigners ignored the event? The missionary shrugged.

He was asked how he could go on working in Burundi. Many victims were Christians. The government had slaughtered Hutus whom he had trained for years. Put on the defensive, the missionary laughed nervously. "I suppose you could say that's our job," he said, "preparing people to die."

Catholic leaders did not remain silent, but they did not say very much, either. Statements deploring the strife came from Pope Paul, the papal nuncio in Bujumbura, and the five bishops of Burundi. But all were guarded and mild. Against the enormity of what happened in Burundi, the Catholic pronouncements were ineffectual. They hardly amounted to any kind of condemnation.

The reaction of the U.S. government to the events was typical of most foreign governments. Thomas P. Melady, who was then the American Ambassador, believed that his first responsibility was protecting the one hundred and fifty Americans in Burundi. Soon after the killings began, he rebuked the American Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, for briefing American correspondents there about the troubles. Melady feared that news reports in American newspapers would be easily traced by the Burundi government to the American Embassy in Bujumbura and its main sources, the American missionaries. The clamp on the news became so tight that Senator Edward M. Kennedy complained in June, 1972, that the State Department was even withholding from Congress its information on the massacres.

The United States did not criticize Burundi in public until May, 1973, when President Nixon made a small reference to the troubles in his annual foreign-policy report to Congress. ". . . Countries have a right to take positions of conscience," Nixon wrote. "We would have expected that the first responsibility for taking such positions rested upon the African nations, either individually or collectively. The United States urged African leaders to address the problem of the killings in Burundi. . . . All of the African leaders we spoke to voiced their concern to us; some raised it with Burundi's leaders. But ultimately none spoke out when these diplomatic efforts failed." Nixon neglected to mention that, in this matter of conscience, the United States had also refused to speak out when its diplomatic efforts, such as they were, failed.

The U.S. government avoided the issue by persuading itself that the killings were an African problem. If African governments chose to ignore it, American officials reasoned, why should the U.S. government make an issue of it? Moreover, American officials believed that protest was futile.

The United States did suspend a fund of $25,000 in foreign aid that it allots every year to the Ambassador to finance small projects around the countryside. But the United States will supply $300,000 worth of relief to Burundi this year, mostly in surplus food. American officials insist this will be distributed only to the widows and orphans of the victims. But an American relief worker who does the actual distributing said: "Good God, I can't discriminate between Tutsis and Hutus. I have to give the food to whoever needs it, in every part of the country. I can't give the food only to Hutus."

Belgium was the only Western country to react differently. The former colonial power in Burundi, Belgium is the largest donor of foreign aid and has the greatest number of nationals living there, about three thousand. In May, 1972, Premier Gaston Eyskens of Belgium denounced the massacres as "veritable genocide" and threatened to cut off Belgian aid, which amounts to $4.5 million a year. In the end the threat was not carried out. The Belgians did withdraw their thirty-five advisers from the Burundi army, less to punish Burundi than to placate Belgian public opinion. But, aside from this, Belgian aid was neither withdrawn nor cut substantially.

Belgian officials took the view of most foreigners supplying aid to Burundi. They insisted that punishing the government by withdrawing assistance would only hurt the masses. "If we cut foreign aid," said an official from another country, "you will only have misery here. If you put a curtain around this country, it will be worse." As a result, the United Nations, the Common Market, France, and West Germany, like Belgium, have all maintained foreign-aid programs in Burundi.

Almost all African governments reacted in a predictable way. As usual in cases of African disorder, the governments either ignored the massacres or pledged support to the Micombero government. In fact, Zaire rushed troops to Bujumbura, and Tanzania sent ammunition. The reason was simple: African leaders did not want to break their facade of Black African unity.

Leverage

It would be foolish now to be optimistic about the future of Rwanda and Burundi. Systematic murder of the ethnic enemy has become a legitimate political weapon in both countries. Since neither has solved its ethnic problems, it is a safe guess that slaughter will be used again. The ease with which it was renewed in Burundi this year is proof enough of that.

Can anything be done to stop all this? There may be some truth in the argument by American officials that they and other outsiders have little influence on what goes on in this part of the world. But it is also true that governments outside Africa have considerable leverage which they could have applied against Rwanda, Burundi, and the rest of Africa.

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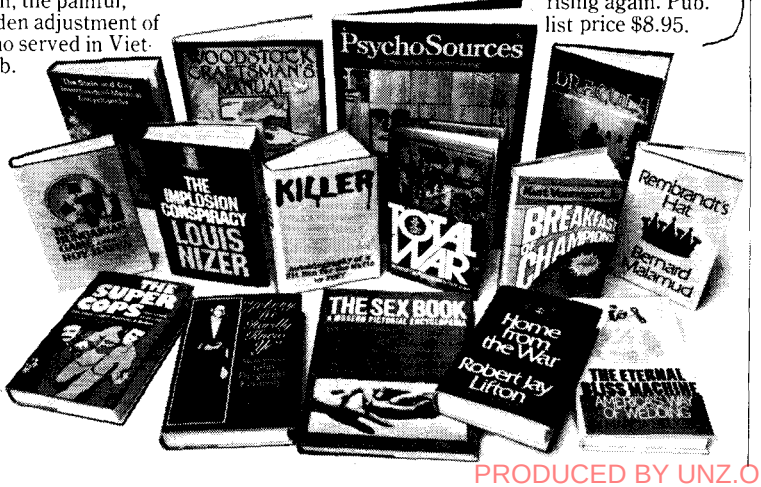

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by both Rwanda and Burundi, and both countries would be bankrupt without foreign aid from Belgium, France, Germany, the Common Market, and the United Nations. Perhaps a coffee boycott or the withdrawal of aid would not stop the slaughter in either country, but neither weapon has ever been used.

The industrialized countries could also put pressure on the other African countries to face the problem of Rwanda and Burundi. They could, for example, refuse to support all African resolutions on southern Africa in the United Nations unless these resolutions also condemned the disaster in Burundi and Rwanda. Perhaps this would only infuriate Africa. But it might also shame Africa into dealing with its problems. At the least, it would expose African hypocrisy.

Finally, there is the question of whether countries like the United States have the moral right to remain silent while all the killing goes on. Perhaps it is true that condemnation would have been futile in Burundi last year. But no one knows for sure. All that is known is that, while everyone kept quiet, more than a hundred thousand people died. Keeping quiet obviously didn't save anyone. Perhaps shouting might have.

—STANLEY MEISLER

THE MENLO PARK POLICE

It is a family fight; the mother herself has called the police. This is in the genteel suburb of Menlo Park, California, twenty-five miles south of San Francisco. Cops dread these calls—they are unpredictable, violent, and often result in homicides—and spare no muscle quelling them. Such fights frequently have a way of bringing out the truth about policemen, especially when, as in this brawl, they are between members of a black family.

Surprisingly, no sirens have heralded the arrival of the police. Two patrolmen, one gray and wheezy, the other young and tense, hurry up the flight of wooden steps to the small apartment where the ruckus is. Except for the word "POLICE" sewn in small letters onto their jacket pockets, the two men look like civilians. Instead of the traditional blue, they wear slacks and blazers; and while they carry the usual artillery of guns, Mace, blackjacks, and handcuffs, all are concealed beneath their jackets.

"Evening," says Jim Enslen, the younger cop, looking quickly around the little kitchen. "Anything we can do to help?" Inside, a young black man, goateed and handsome, sags against the wall, his pupils dilated and his knees slack, the giveaway posture of a heroin high. His T-shirt is ripped across the front, the result of a fight with his father, who now lurks beneath the staircase in the street below. The two have been out drinking all day, and near evening the father, almost drunk, had given his son ten dollars to hang on to so they wouldn't be broke at the end of the night. Instead, the son had used the money to buy the heroin fix, then claimed he'd lost it.

"No, man, nothin's wrong," he says, his eyes wary, but feigning surprise at the intrusion.

His mother comes out of the bedroom dressed in a nightgown, a tiny wizened figure. She nods gratefully to the cops, then glares at her son. "Now, I don't need this," she hisses at him. Defensively he clenches his fists and bellows indignantly, "I'll kill that m———f———! Lookee here, he tore my shirt! I'll kill him!"

This is the time when the cops usually move with their fists, convinced that only quick physical action can control the situation. I wait for the punch in the face, the slam of the youth's body against the wall, the screams, the mother's tears now on behalf of her son and the cop's hard, angry retort, "Listen, lady, you called *us.* And I don't care if your old man decides he won't make a beef against him. This guy goes *in.*"

Instead Enslen leans against the wall, trying to appear casual, and in a patient tone says, "Look, that isn't going to get it."

"I don't care! I'm gonna kill him!" shouts the son, his fists clenched like a fighter's, ready to swing. Enslen watches him cautiously, but his tone remains placating. "Look," he repeats, "why don't you stay away from him."

"I'm gonna kill him," the youth says again, but the conviction is beginning to leave his voice. A few threats more and he is all played out, and the two cops finally relax and get ready to leave. Enslen takes a deep breath, sticks his flashlight under his armpit, and shoves his hands into his pockets against the chilly Bay Area night.

"Don't hesitate to call again if you need us," he says to the woman as he moves toward the door. The older policeman, Jack Kamholz, follows. At the door he stops, turns, and says quietly to the young black, "Your father says you're using junk."

"Man, I ain't been foolin' around with no junk," the youth lies, now defensive and momentarily aroused again. "Uh-huh," replies Kamholz resignedly before he closes the door. "Well, take care. And stay away from him."

As they drive off, I am surprised that neither policeman complains about not having made the all-important arrest to justify the half hour spent at the apartment. Police in nearly all the nation's forty thousand departments are judged and have learned to judge themselves by the number of their arrests. To cool a situation off without taking anyone into custody is regarded as a waste of time. As cops are quick to say in their own defense, "We're cops; we're not social workers." But Jack Kamholz says, almost as if he were a social worker, "He's just started using the stuff. In two years . . ." and he shakes his head ruefully at the thought of what the young man's life will be like then. "But it will take years to change things for the colored. They've been down, been dominated for so long."

Social work

In Menlo Park the police do consider themselves social workers of a sort—at least a large part of the time—and they're proud of it. As the report of the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice, better known as the Katzenbach Report, showed in the wake of the riots and demonstrations of the 1960s, America's police actually spend less time fighting crime than they do performing services: helping old ladies

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cross streets, controlling crowds, asking people to turn down blaring radios at 3:00 A.M., finding lost children, directing traffic, and making out accident reports, to name a few. And, the report concluded, it is fitting and essential that police continue in these non-crime-fighting roles, and even expand them into permanent programs that formally involve the police in the total life of the community. This is essential both for the sake of getting more cooperation from citizens, so necessary in the fight against crime, and for keeping the black ghettos from exploding all over again.

Few police chiefs have paid attention to the report. Most are stuck in the tradition that conceives of policemen solely and narrowly as crime fighters. What is more, implicit in the way their organizations are structured is the notion that cops are untrustworthy, even brainless. With rare exceptions, the universally accepted police organization is a paramilitary dictatorship ruled over absolutely by the chief. For a lowly cop on the beat to question the chief's wisdom or presume to add to it would be unthinkable, even though beat policemen are often the only ones who know what conditions are on the streets where crime occurs. Much of the time they aren't even given enough information about the orders they receive from on high to do a good job. It is a demoralizing tradition, and even the best and most enthusiastic cops eventually get ground down by it. It also accounts for the difficulty police departments have in recruiting the bright young college graduates they want.

The tradition is as old as Sir Robert Peel's "bobbies," who were first recruited in London in 1829 from the town's thug population on the premise that they alone had the brawn and street sense to control the rest of London's criminals. The tradition carried over to this country, particularly in New York's once hoodlum-ridden Bowery and during the heyday of San Francisco's infamous Barbary Coast, where toughs were used to control their own kind on the other side of the legal line. While hiring practices today bear no resemblance to those early recruiting methods, the strict military discipline by which those unruly first cops were kept in line has hung on. Even today, though most departments require at least a high school education and some evidence of civilized character, physical traits such as a minimum height standard, good eyesight, and strength are still emphasized over intellectual and psychological traits. Unfortunately they don't have much to do with being a good cop.

For a long time none of that mattered much to anyone. As Harvard's Charles Rogovin, a top police scholar, notes, "For years nobody paid any attention to the police. They were just there." Until ten years ago the subject wasn't even considered fit for an academic specialty. But then came the riotous and anti-authoritarian sixties, when racial and political turmoil brought police and demonstrators into one bloody clash after another. And with each one, the police image emerged more and more stained. Instead of quelling riots, the police frequently made them worse, and sometimes even caused them. By the time of the bloodbath during the Chicago Democratic Convention in 1968, it had become obvious to all but the last diehards that the police weren't doing their job very well.

"Typical"

Only a very few of the nation's police chiefs have responded to the need for organizational reform and are doing something about it. Departments in Madison, Wisconsin; Miami, Florida; Dayton, Ohio; and Kansas City, Missouri, are some that are reforming. California has the largest concentration of progressive police chiefs, notably in its smaller cities and towns such as Oxnard, Fremont, Simi Valley, and Richmond. Nowhere else, though, have reforms been in effect for so long or been so thorough as in Menlo Park, where Victor Ian Cizankis, a thoughtful young police chief in charge of a thirty-three-man force, started demilitarizing and instituting other organizational changes five years ago. By now his reforms are well known in the police world and to its scholars, and lately government agencies have begun to notice, too.

Menlo Park is not the sort of

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place where one would expect to find encouraging contrasts to prevailing police practices. It is a quiet, well-mannered town of six square miles and a population of 30,000 that makes it "typical" (most American cities are in the 25,000 to 50,000 population bracket). The streets in its upper-middle-class neighborhoods are thick with lovely old trees that shield post-World War II ranch-style houses from passersby. The town has a conservative city council that tolerates no crime-generating joints; all bars, save those decorously situated in high-priced restaurants, go quickly out of business. Prostitution is negligible, hard drugs are just becoming a problem, and there are only one or two homicides a year.

But there is a harsh side to this picture, which makes the town typical in another sense. Like so many parts of America, Menlo Park has both poverty and racial problems. Twenty percent of its population is black, and virtually all the blacks live in a district called Belle Haven, a relatively treeless, pie-shaped wedge on the east end of town where white people used to live. It is cut off from the rest of the city by the roaring Bayshore Freeway. While the citizens of the affluent city as a whole have a median income of $13,500, those in the Belle Haven district have a median income of $7600. As is the case throughout the nation, crime in the black ghetto is disproportionately higher than in the rest of the city.

Back in 1966 and 1967, when the Menlo Park police had a reputation for being, as one member of the force says, "a beat 'em up, throw 'em in the can" kind of police department, Belle Haven, like black districts all over America, exploded in a series of riots. But Menlo Park was lucky. At the time Cizankis, then a twenty-nine-year-old detective, was the only man on the force who knew what to do each time there was trouble, thanks to some special riot-control training he had received in the Marines. Because the aging chief was ill, Cizankis was put in charge during the riots. Never, under his command, were there more than minor injuries or property damage, and that was enough to catch the attention of the progressive city manager, Mike Bedwell. When the chief's health forced his retirement, Bedwell picked Cizankis, then the most junior of five sergeants, for the $21,000-a-year job of police chief. He took over in June, 1968.

Despite his Lithuanian surname, Cizankis grew up in the tough Irish district of Buffalo, New York. After his graduation from parochial school at seventeen, he went into the Marines, where he spent eight years, five of them as an M.P., in the Middle East. In Jordan he met his wife, Gertrude, an attractive Chicago-born woman of Korean parentage, who was then a secretary in the American Embassy. When he was discharged in 1962, Cizankis knew he wanted to be a cop in civilian life. He had already researched the job market and decided on California because of the high salaries and the fact that its police departments were closer to being truly professional than those of any other state. He chose the Bay Area for its beauty, took all the police department tests in the region, and grabbed the first offer that came—Menlo Park's.

Cizankis, now thirty-six, has the confident air of a man who is good and who knows it. Last June he received his bachelor's degree in sociology from nearby Notre Dame College. During some semesters, on nights when he doesn't go to school himself, he teaches college courses, including one in black history.

Cizankis' face is unmemorable. One remembers instead the thinning sandy hair and the sideburns, the towering height (six feet four), the vibrant voice, the pleasant but no-nonsense manner, and the springy energy of his long-strided walk. Despite a casual slouch when he sits, and much repetition of his favorite compliment for his men—that "they're loose, they're not uptight"—Cizankis himself is a tense, often ill-at-ease man. He calls himself "an introspective cat."

Changes began in the department from the moment he took over. He had noted from his reading of the Katzenbach Report, the source for many of his reforms, that Americans don't think that policemen are very bright. But, says Cizankis,

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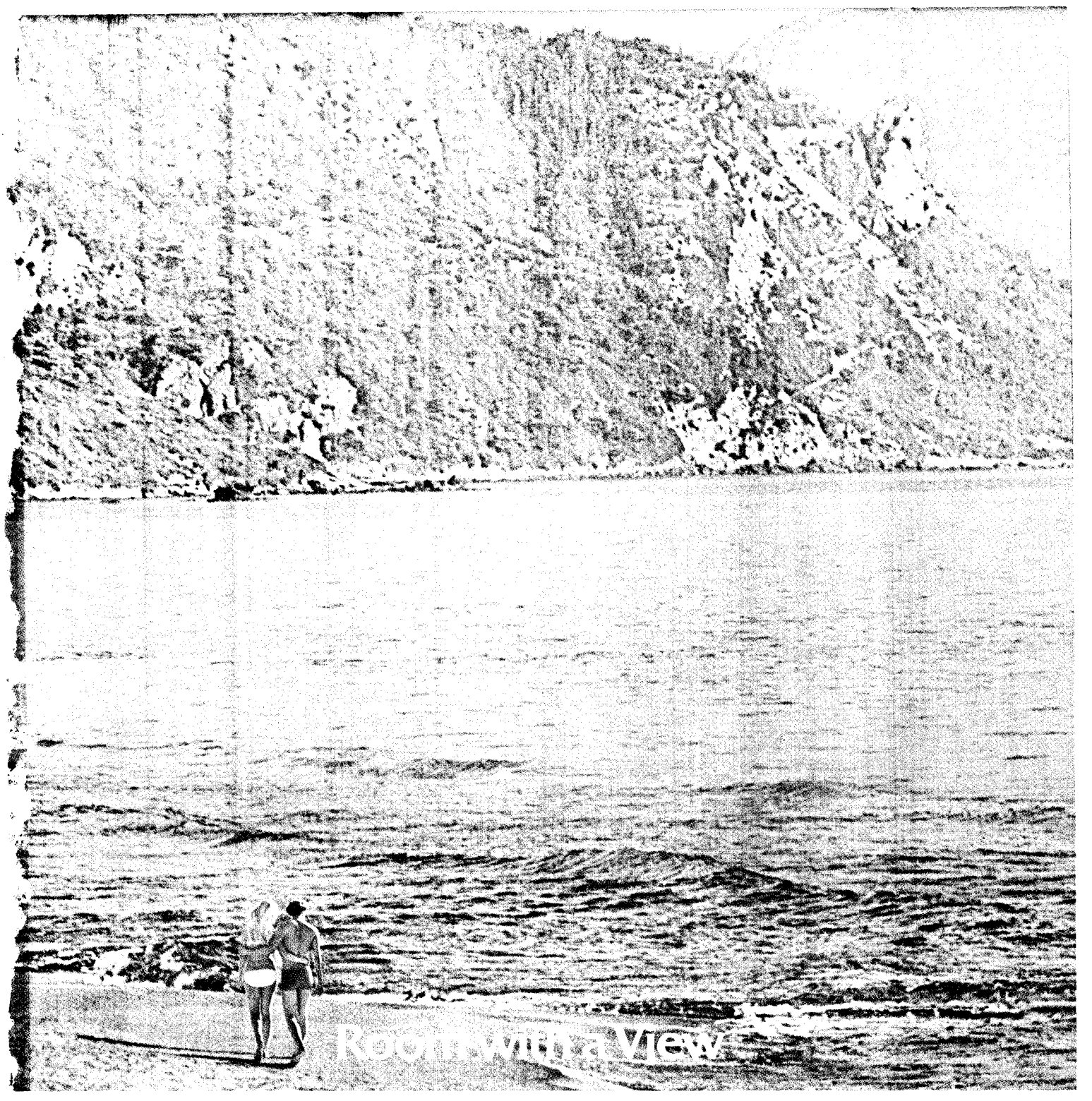

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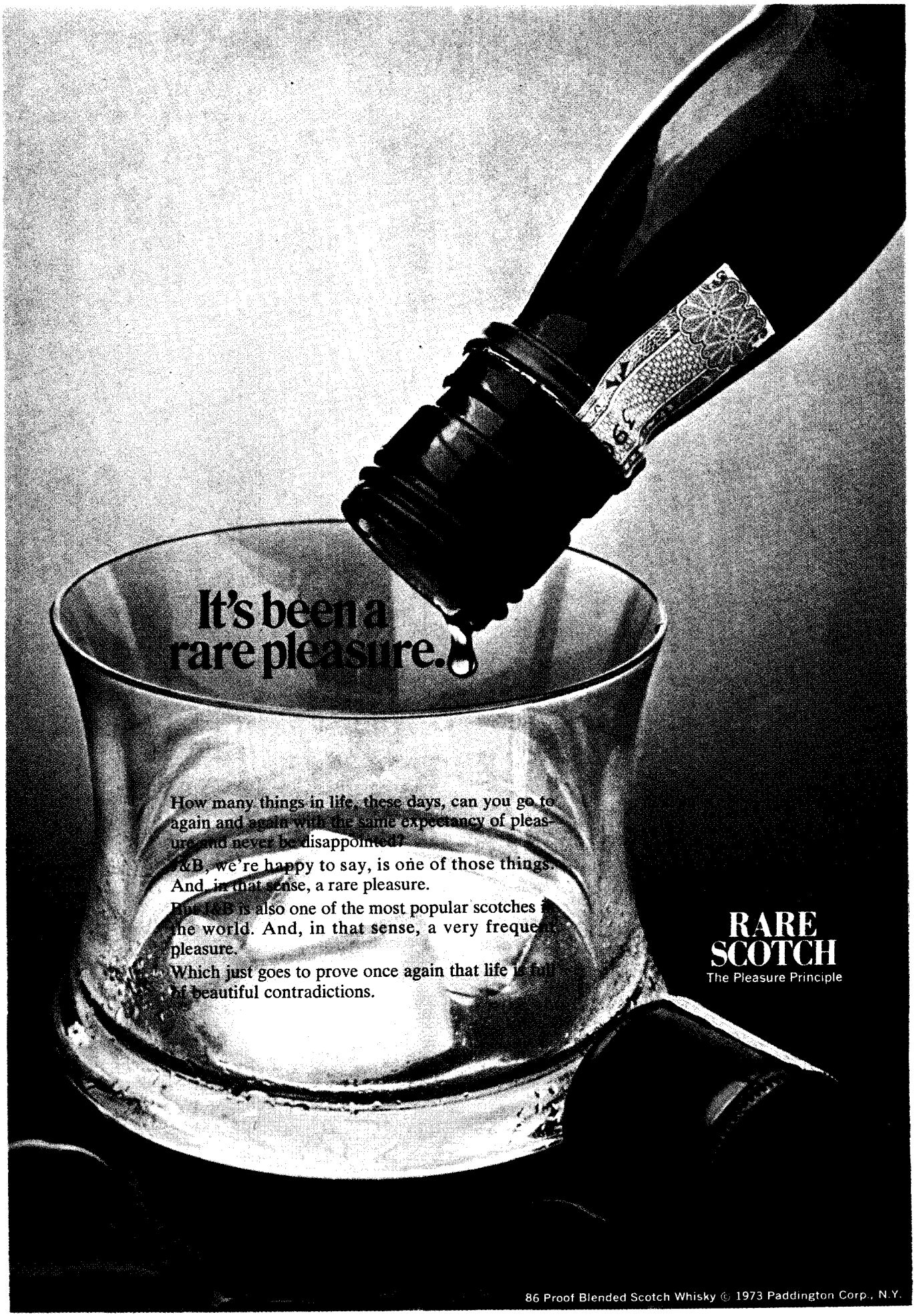

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"as soon as you take a cop out of uniform and put him in a suit, the public thinks he's brighter."

Accordingly, his first official move was to change the blue uniform to slacks and an olive-green blazer. Although police in some five hundred of the nation's departments now wear such outfits, it was practically unheard of then. Over the next eighteen months it triggered a walkout of nearly half the men on the force, who objected that policemen would lose what little respect and authority was left to them. But for those who stayed on the force there was an immediate increase in status. Bob Anselmo, forty-one, the flamboyant operations director on the force who takes over when the chief is making a speech or attending a conference, gives another reason: "We were also trying to get away from the Gestapo image. You know, saying to the public, 'Hey, I'm a person who puts his pants on just the way you do.' " And, of course, since the men spend only 20 percent of their time performing crime-related tasks, it made little sense to dress in the traditional crime-fighting blue with all its artillery hanging conspicuously around the waist. The "hardware" is still there when it is needed, but is otherwise hidden under the blazers.

The uniform change would have been merely a superficial public relations gimmick, as it is in most departments where it is in effect, without the more substantive changes that followed over the next four years. Despite his time in the Marines, Cizankis is a foe of the paramilitary structure. "It separates the police from the community," he says. "It is like a parent-child relationship from the chief on down, and the last child in line is the citizen. If you talk to him like he's a child, he resents it. It is what is destroying American police departments."

Cizankis dropped the military hierarchy and widened the authority and responsibility at each management level; while the bosses are still very much bosses, the men are treated as professionals who know what they're doing and don't need watching. To eliminate any psychological hangovers of what Cizankis calls "the Chief syndrome," the old military titles were dropped for new ones with echoes of modern management: operations director, team manager, and police agent. Though the title "Chief" was kept, no one is required to address Cizankis as "Chief," though most still do. In addition, Cizankis pressed every man to attend college courses—all have—stepped up on-the-job training, and ordered that all men on the force learn detective skills. Thus, by the spring of 1972, he was able to abolish the elite detective bureau. Menlo Park also raised policemen's salaries in keeping with the new expectations of their judgment. Today a new Menlo Park cop starts at $977 a month, one of the highest police salaries in the country.

No arrest score

Don Hartnett is a twenty-five-year-old former Marine who received a Bronze Star for running through enemy fire to save a wounded buddy in Vietnam. The son and grandson of cops, he is lanky and slow-talking. He looks like thousands of lifeguards who populate California's pools and beaches every summer. When he works, Hartnett wears a Snoopy tie tack because "it's a conversation starter, and whatever puts people at ease makes my job easier." He is thorough and meticulous. He checks the equipment in the trunk of the green and white squad car carefully before he starts a tour. He even looks under the back seat for incriminating drugs a prisoner from a preceding shift might have unloaded on his way to the station.

On this night he cruises slowly through Sector Two, the eastern half of town, which includes Belle Haven, carefully shining his spotlight through the trees into yards, alleyways, and garages in residential neighborhoods, checking for burglars. Like most nights in any small American city, this one is slow. There is a stop to throw a dead cat to the side of the road and call for a pickup by the local humane society, another to check out an elderly white man rummaging around inside the office of a small manufacturing business. As Hartnett has suspected, he is the owner, who has forgotten something; but the man is grateful for the check. Hartnett takes an extra five minutes to shoot the breeze with him before resuming patrol. The conversation seems rather a pointless interlude, but to Hartnett it is an important part of his job. It isn't just public relations. Citizen cooperation is vital in fighting crime, but few departments have institutionalized this use of the chance encounter.

Later a call comes on the radio for a hit-and-run accident in a supermarket parking lot. There we find a thoroughly upset French exchange student from Stanford University pacing back and forth by his car; the rear fender has been destroyed. A few minutes later, two witnesses arrive with the license number of the runaway car and the address of the house where they have followed it. Half an hour later, Hartnett returns with a frightened, disheveled young woman who says she works as a waitress. She admits that she hit the fender. "I got scared and left," she says, and adds that she has no insurance and is broke. Hartnett could arrest her, for this is

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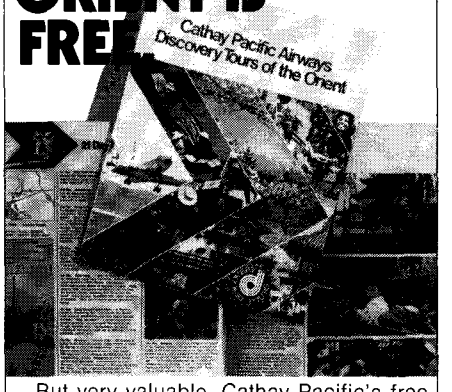

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still technically a hit-and-run case. Most cops would, for she seems flighty and irresponsible, and besides the night is cold. Many an irritated policeman would feel entitled to increase his arrest score for the trouble of chasing her.

But the Menlo Park cop's approach, with its emphasis on what Cizankis calls "helping people problem-solve," puts him out of the class of blue-collar bureaucrats who populate police departments. Hartnett thinks like a professional—not of his own discomfort but of how best to get through this smoothly, and how to deal with the one problem remaining: fixing the student's car. He takes the lengthy accident report, making pleasantries between questions, says good night to the foreign student, and takes the still quaking woman back home. Back on the road he tells me why he didn't arrest her. "It wouldn't have served any purpose if I had arrested her. Anyway, if I did, she'd have to use the money for a lawyer. This way she can use it to fix his car."

Fine point

Dick Osborn is a huge hulk of a man who is only thirty but looks more like forty-five. He is a former Air Force intelligence agent, a judo expert, and the department's instructor of unarmed defense. He is proud that he has never once used his gun. As he cruises through Sector One, the white, western half of town, a call comes over the radio from the dispatcher at headquarters for a 415, a family fight. In less than a minute, Osborn is at the door.

A nattily suited man in his late twenties answers with a surprised "Oh, hi." Behind him, down the hall, his wife, dressed in pajamas and an old gray coat, her dirty dark hair hanging limply around her face, leans sullenly against the wall. Two little children tear around, thrilled at the excitement, while an infant sleeps in a room at the end of the hall. Some books are strewn about the living room, but a quick scanning from the doorway convinces Osborn that everything has calmed down before his arrival. Still he hangs around a good five minutes talking about the weather before he says a polite good night and goes back on the road.

By now I no longer expect the more common tough threat from the cop to haul them both off to jail if the fight starts again, but, on the other hand, this particular casual chitchat seems inappropriate under the circumstances. I ask him why he didn't leave when he saw that things were calm.

"I wanted to give the wife a chance to say something if she needed help," Osborn replies. "Those books looked as if they had been thrown around." And, he adds, "We only come in when family fights become intolerable to everybody. They are complicated and involved because the problems have been in existence a long time. We can't solve anything, we just prevent physical violence. In that case I would say the wife is probably frustrated because they're young marrieds with three small children which keep her busy all the time. He is very active in his job and she feels neglected, and when he comes home and she's not full of vim and vigor from wrestling three kids all day, he feels rejected. They need someone to counsel them who has time to get involved with them on a deeper level." Osborn says he'll pass this case on to a community service specialist on the force who will revisit the couple and probably make a referral to a counseling agency if they want it.

This is what the Katzenbach Report meant by involving cops in all aspects of community life through formalized programs. Traditional police departments have only window-dressing public relations programs, hastily put together, usually after some racial incident, and dropped soon after when things settle down again. Cizankis and his men, on the other hand, have set up some fifteen permanent and actively used community service programs in Menlo Park. The one Osborn spoke of is the Family Crisis Program.

One potentially controversial outcome of encouraging policemen to use their own judgment is that sometimes the law is administered unevenly. The alternative is the cumbersome Rules and Procedures book that is supposed to guide a policeman's every action in the paramilitary departments. Each cop is supposed to memorize it for, in theory at least, it covers every conceivable situation. Cizankis threw that book out when he took over in Menlo Park and substituted training and education instead. But new problems have arisen as a result, and while they may be preferable to those that stem from having the law administered by a narrow-minded bureaucrat, they have created difficult and uneven decisions.

Dennis McMullen, twenty-seven, is a crime specialist. He and the other man in his unit are a cut above the rest in their combination of ability and investigative experience. They concentrate on one type of crime at a time (currently it is burglary, the town's biggest crime problem), analyze its patterns, and determine how the force should cope with it. (Recently they predicted the time and place of three burglaries in a week and were waiting when the thieves arrived.) But McMullen likes to keep in touch with what else is happening, and today he makes a detour from his special rounds to watch Brad Jones, a balding young policeman with a polite but officious manner, arrest a truck driver.

The middle-aged truck driver is so soused he can barely stand. As he stumbles out of the truck's cabin, wine bottle in hand, McMullen recognizes him as a hard-working Menlo Park man with enormous financial burdens and family problems. McMullen shakes his head and says, "He doesn't need this. He's drunker than a skunk, he's wrong, and he shouldn't be out on the road, but right now he doesn't need this." I ask what he would do if he were the arresting officer, and McMullen says he would just take the man home. "But Jones does things more by the book, and he's right of course. The man broke the law, and he is dangerous in that truck. That's the hardest thing about this job—deciding when to go by the book and when not to."

The men hold Cizankis in high regard. But regardless of the leveling of rank and the freedom to call him by his first name, he remains a tense and remote figure to them. They are ill at ease when he is around. In his small, sterile cell of an office at headquarters in the

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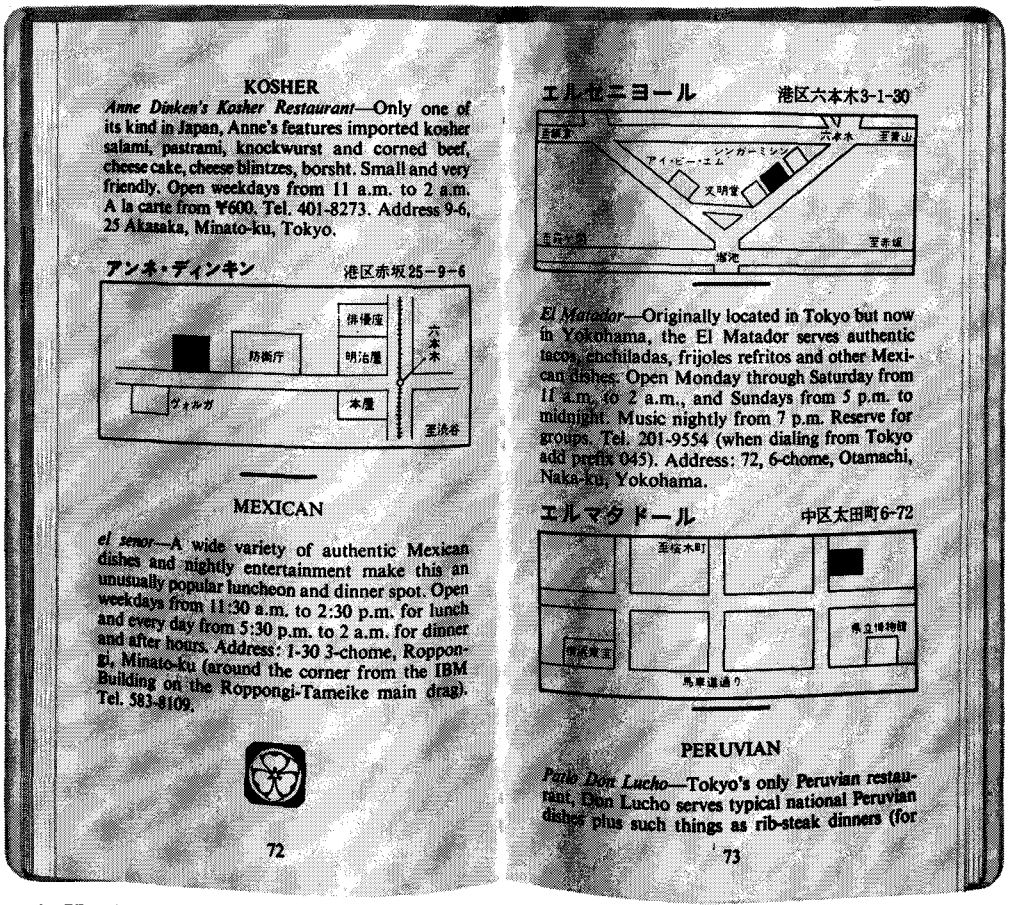

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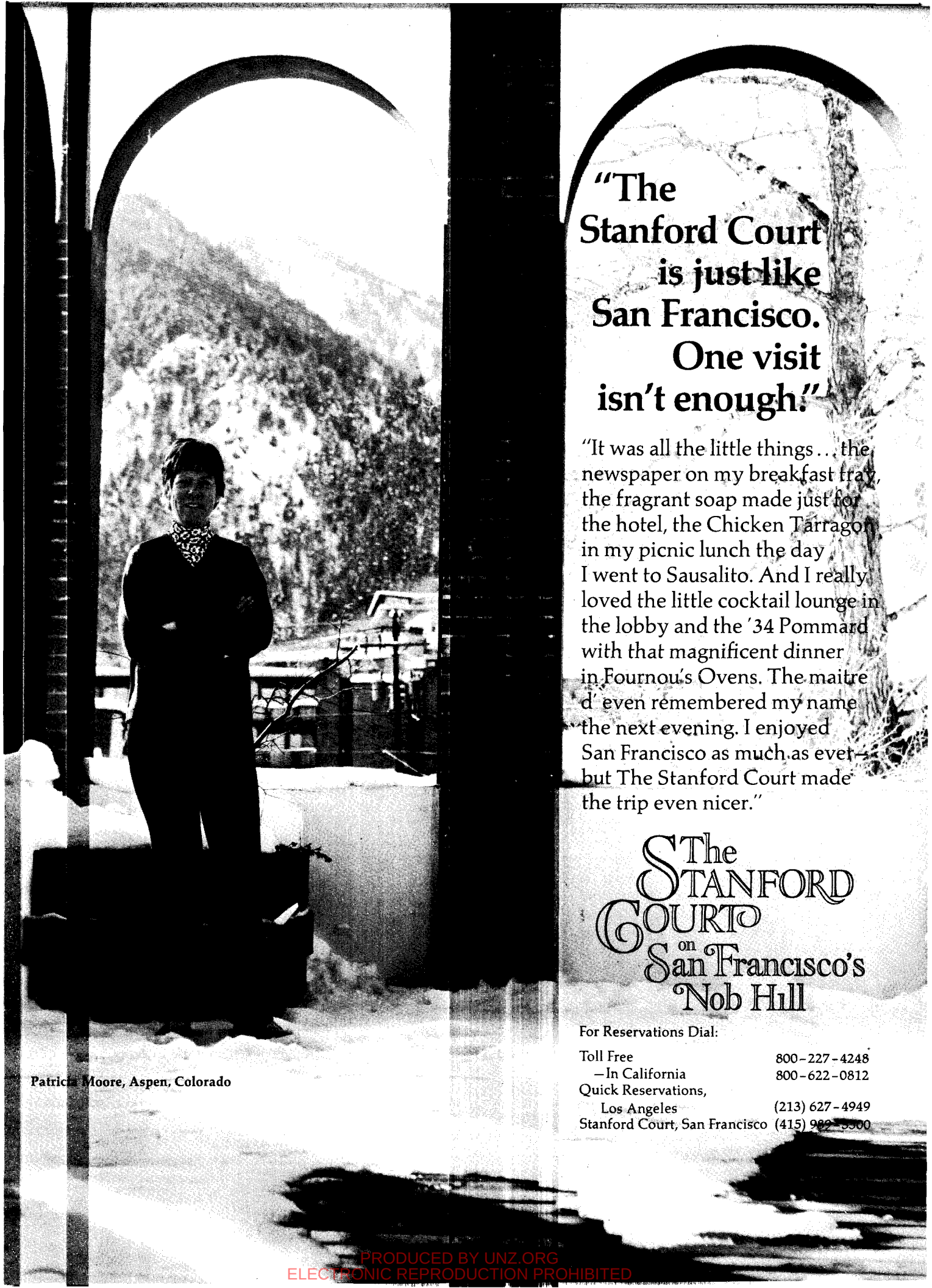

Patricia Moore, Aspen, Colorado

"The Stanford Court is just like San Francisco. One visit isn't enough."

"It was all the little things . . . the newspaper on my breakfast tray, the fragrant soap made just for the hotel, the Chicken Tarragon in my picnic lunch the day I went to Sausalito. And I really loved the little cocktail lounge in the lobby and the '34 Pommard with that magnificent dinner in Fournou's Ovens. The maitre d' even remembered my name the next evening. I enjoyed San Francisco as much as ever—but The Stanford Court made the trip even nicer."

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town's newly built civic center sits a bust ("That's my friend Socrates"), and such books as *Two Million Unnecessary Arrests, The Greening of America, The Democratic Policeman,* and *Future Shock.* He doesn't socialize, and he keeps strictly to himself what he regards as private. I was curious to know whether a reformist police chief voted for McGovern or Nixon, so one day in his office I asked Cizankis who his choice was. His face flushed and he bristled angrily as he replied, "Who I voted for is my business." I explained that I had also asked each man I interviewed the same question. "Oh, really," he said with interest, the anger suddenly gone. "What did they say?" Most said they voted for Nixon, I told him, "but they have you pegged as a McGovern man." He smiled tightly and replied, "Let's just say I had problems with both candidates."

But at home with Gertrude and a martini, he seems to unwind. Tonight he is telling me what he looks for in a policeman. "I need a man who is willing to stick his neck out and expose himself to danger, who is not afraid. I don't mean tough, because that can be a cover-up for fear. But he has to be capable of using force when a situation requires it. Anyone who says police can operate without force isn't being realistic. The fine point is that you use only as much as is necessary. But the most important thing is that I need people who can talk to other people and who are intellectually curious. What I do not want is cynicism; that is deadly for policemen. Unfortunately most of our departments build that into their men."

Gertrude comes in from the kitchen with Camembert cheese and fresh pears. She is a slim, bespectacled woman full of humorous and opinionated intelligence about the town's local politicians and other characters. She is a full-time housewife and mother of their two sons, eight and eleven. She calls herself her husband's "conscience," and listens attentively when he talks. Though Cizankis admits to being an ambitious man, he claims he isn't interested in moving on to a job as police chief in a big city. And while there are those in town who insist he's got his eye on directing one of those foundations that study police, and others who predict that he will one day run for major political office, Cizankis steadfastly maintains, "I'm not as personally ambitious as some people think I am. My family is the biggest part of my life; we're a complete unit. To trade off my life-style with them just isn't worth it. Life is too short, and anyway, I don't have the need for a bigger town." He is not very persuasive.

"False reality"

Statistics show that the crime rate in Menlo Park is either lower than average or on a par with that of other locales, but never higher. Across the country burglaries in towns the size of Menlo Park increased by 39 percent from 1969 to 1972, while in Menlo Park the rate was down by 8 percent. Robbery and grand theft are on a par with other communities in the area; the number of rapes is negligible. Two sets of statistics Cizankis is proud of are those for assaults on police officers (up across the nation but down by 150 percent in Menlo Park since 1969) and traffic accidents (up dramatically in most places but down in Menlo Park for three years). A data-gathering system devised by a Chicano cop in the department, Joe Ochoa, indicates traffic trouble spots where heavy enforcement should be applied. It is one of the eight programs originated by Cizankis' men on their own time which are now used by the department, and it is one good indicator of the high level of morale within the department.

But as the Katzenbach Report noted, the real test of a cop's mettle is how well he gets on in the minority sections of town. A nasty cop in a white neighborhood is simply a nasty cop. In a black district he is seen as the oppressor and can easily set off a riot or get himself killed. Yet no police department worth its salt will trade off the tension of police presence in the black community for a laissez-faire attitude toward criminals in the name of good community relations. A cop must stop anyone who his training and experience tell him is acting suspiciously. Because crime in black communities is comparatively high, "harsh reality," as Cizankis says,

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dictates that blacks will be stopped more frequently than whites.

However sensitive the police are to the black community, I heard many charges of racism and harassment in Belle Haven. Some were merely rhetorical, or could not be substantiated; a few turned out to be fabrications. But some others could not be ignored. For example, Mrs. Purty Drake, a warehouseman's wife, was infuriated when two years ago Cizankis himself stopped and questioned her fifteen-year-old son, Stanley. He was walking home with a friend along the much burglarized route through the white section that Belle Haven kids take on their way to the public high school. When she complained indignantly to Cizankis, he told her that Stanley had been acting "suspiciously." She still feels bitter about the incident, particularly since Stanley was innocent, but Cizankis denies that there was any harassment involved. He points out that 70 percent of all Menlo Park crime is committed by blacks. "The harsh realities of life say you've got to do some inquiring when you see something suspicious," he says.

But when officers do overstep their legal or professional bounds, Cizankis has been known to move swiftly to punish. Two years ago, one of his men spotted a Belle Haven boy walking the same route Stanley Drake was stopped on, but this time his being there at all was suspicious since it was during school hours. However, the boy, still in grammar school, reminded the cop that Belle Haven's primary schools were closed that day in honor of Malcolm X's birthday, and he said that he was going to the high school to meet his older brother. With no reason other than his own suspicion, the policeman took the boy into his squad car and drove him home.

The boy's outraged mother demanded an investigation and written response from the chief. Two days later she received a letter of apology saying that the officer had been wrong and as a result was on probation and docked of pay. Learning that the cop is still on the force and now fully restored to the chief's good graces, I sought him out. Reluctant to reopen old wounds, he would only answer briefly: "Cizankis hadn't been chief very long when that happened, and I had a very negative attitude toward him. At the time I thought he was trying to show the black community something, and I was very bitter because it cost me about a thousand dollars." How does he feel about it now? "Because of what he did I'm a better cop today," he replied.

Even so, the department's only black cop (Cizankis says that he wants more but rarely has job openings), Moses Webb, thirty, a round-faced, articulate man, declares, "There is no doubt in my mind that there is some racism within the department." Cizankis does not deny the charge. "Racism exists all through our society," he says. I'm not speaking of people being abused physically, but in the institutionalized sense where it is the ideas you have about other people. Certainly, though, we do not have any overt racism in the department. That hasn't been manifested in over three years. We're not clean, but nobody else is either."

Many old-time cops sneer at the idea pushed by the Katzenbach Report, by the academics off in ivory towers, and by the contemptible "liberals" that policemen would improve if they went to college. Those cops are right when they assert that no one can learn in a college classroom the things he needs to know to stay alive and do his job on the streets. Cizankis, whose men by now all have some college credit, with four already at work on master's degrees, agrees to an extent. "Education can't make someone a better policeman in the technical sense," he says. But he adds, "In the college classroom he gets a chance to feel and see a lot of other views that remind him that policing is not the only world. There is a false reality in the police system that all people hate us and so we have to stick together. I can train a man to be a policeman, but only education can train him to be a whole man."

The Menlo Park model could be followed by two-thirds of the country's police, since most American towns are about the size of Menlo Park. But it is the big cities that employ the other one-third of the nation's policemen, and it is there that reforms are most urgently needed. Obviously it would be impossible to transplant the Menlo Park organization to New York City, where the 33,500-man force is bigger than Menlo Park's entire population. One factor that allows the Menlo Park system to work with relatively few controls on the men is that it is so small that everyone knows what everyone else is doing. But Stanford Law School's Richard Danzig, an ex-New Yorker who has done a number of studies on both the New York and Menlo Park police departments, thinks that a version of Cizankis' organizational reforms is possible for big cities. While Menlo Park's open-door policy between chief and patrol cop would be out of the question, he envisions demilitarization and collective decision-making taking place at the different hierarchical levels: within big-city precincts, between precinct heads and the city-wide commanders, and between the latter and the chiefs.

Such an experiment is in fact being tried now in Bedford-Stuyvesant, and when Adam Butcher, the South Brooklyn Deputy Inspector in charge of the pilot program, paid a recent study visit to Cizankis, he reported that one result already is a remarkable reduction in crime in the ghetto. Cizankis and Butcher believe that the Bedford-Stuyvesant experiment could work for the whole city, though, as Cizankis notes, "it would take a lot more time than it took us to pull it off." But it must be done, he warns: "We've got an accelerated society. While our society has changed, and the demands on police have changed, the police themselves haven't changed," he says. "The data is in now. If within five to ten years we don't change the paramilitary bureaucratic structure, police departments will absolutely fall apart."

—PATRICIA LYNDEN

REPORTS & COMMENT CONTRIBUTORS

Stanley Meisler, a frequent contributor to *The Atlantic,* has reported from Africa for the Los Angeles *Times.*

Patricia Lynden, a former *Newsweek* reporter who now lives in Berkeley, has written for *The Atlantic* about gypsies and New York policemen.

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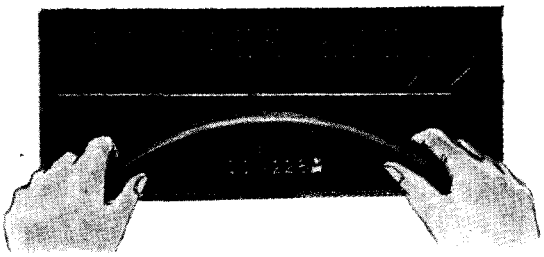
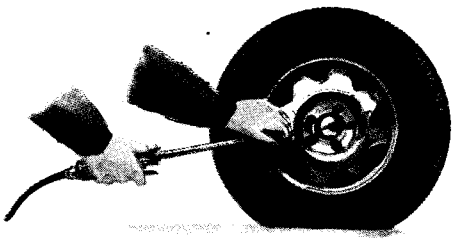
☐ A. 2% ☐ B. 5% ☐ C. 10%



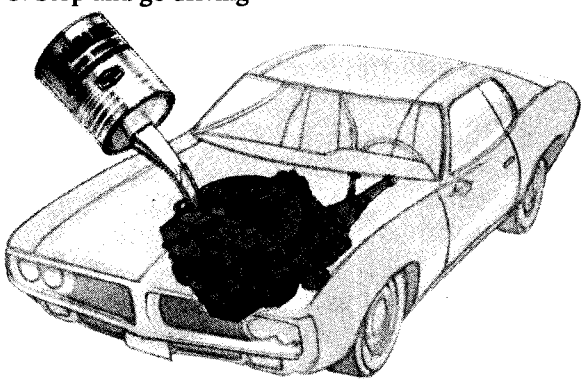
2. You waste gasoline if your tires are improperly inflated. But do you know which causes poorer mileage, overinflated tires or underinflated tires?

☐ A. Overinflated ☐ B. Underinflated



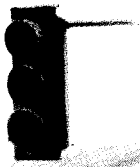
3. The kind of oil you use can affect engine performance, too. Do you know under what conditions it pays to use a premium motor oil like Havoline Super Premium?

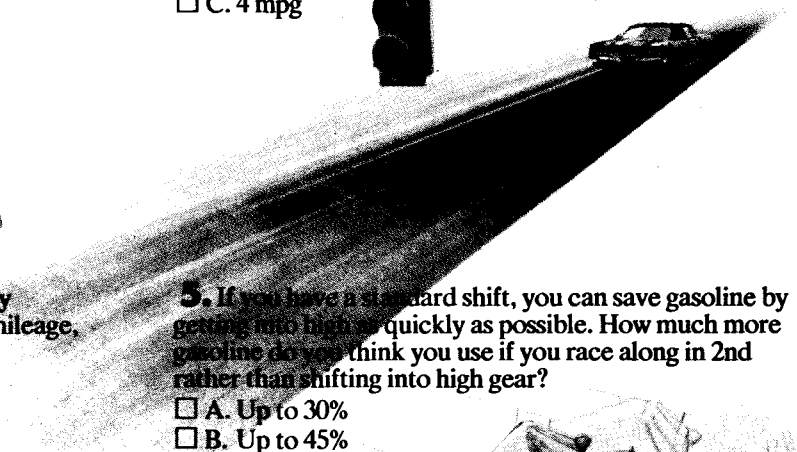
☐ A. High-speed driving
☐ B. Hot-weather driving
☐ C. Stop-and-go driving



4. Jackrabbit starts eat up a lot more gasoline than slow-and-easy ones. But do you have any idea how many miles per gallon jackrabbit starts can cost you on the average?

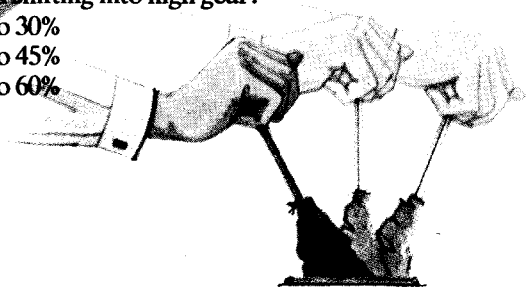
☐ A. 1 mpg
☐ B. 2 mpg
☐ C. 4 mpg





5. If you have a standard shift, you can save gasoline by getting into high as quickly as possible. How much more gasoline do you think you use if you race along in 2nd rather than shifting into high gear?

☐ A. Up to 30%
☐ B. Up to 45%
☐ C. Up to 60%



6. A car that's not properly tuned-up is simply not using gasoline efficiently. About how much gasoline do you think it wastes?

☐ A. Up to 4%
☐ B. Up to 8%
☐ C. Up to 12%

TEXACO

Answers:
1. C 2. B 3. All three: A, B, C 4. B 5. B 6. B

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Innocent Bystander

The B.S. Bicentennial

by L. E. Sissman

As it happens, I'm writing this, owing to the exigencies of a deadline, on the morning of July 4. It is an old-fashioned Fourth if there ever was one: after a few illicit firecrackers down the road last night, the celebratory sounds have faded to a desultory chain saw, the voices of neighbors preparing for a cookout, and a few brave birds—robins, mostly—who are oblivious to the early heat.

Yet I'm reminded, in all this semi-rustic, semi-antique American calm, that just three years ahead lies the biggest celebration of them all: the bicentennial of these United States. Given the kinds and numbers of problems our country has faced and flubbed over the last decade or two, one might think that the forthcoming jubilee would be subdued, retrospective, elegiac, maybe even prayerful. Given our native bumptiousness and ebullition, though, one might be certain that the party would be big, noisy, brash, and pointless.

And so, I fear, it will, if the mountains of handouts, bulletins, and documents I've been reading lately are any indication. My researches were triggered off by the arrival, a couple of weeks ago, of a large, glossy, red, white, and blue envelope at the offices of *The Atlantic.* "Media kit," it shouted, in Second-Coming type, on the outside; on the inside, it was filled with exhortations to editors to do their part in the bicentennial shivaree. Entitled "How To Reach And Involve American Newspaper, Magazine And Periodical Readers In The American Revolution Bicentennial," the central brochure began by quoting the President ("By working together to meet this unique challenge, we can make 1976 as memorable as was the year 1776—for America, and for the world") and went on to explain that, since "now more than ever, the American people look to you to lead them on into history and even greater understanding and achievement," the print media can "initiate projects and activities that involve the lives of your readers and contribute greatly to the success of the Bicentennial and this Nation." (Capitals theirs; the authors of this brochure are great on caps, conferring them on such innocent, plebeian words as Country, Print Media, Commemoration, Century, Citizen, Channel, and Quality of American Life.) The brochure then goes on to suggest some hot new bicentennial ideas for jaded editors who wish to Do Their Part, including "articles on long-time residents . . . photo stories on Bicentennial projects which can demonstrate in a particularly graphic manner [what else?] 'good works by good citizens' . . . articles directed to strengthen individual pride in one's particular cultural heritage and to demonstrate to every Citizen that every cultural community has contributed equally to American history and life [which is surely patently untrue] . . . sponsoring of Bicentennial-related contests—Essay Contests on 'Freedom of the Press,' 'How My Community Can Get Involved in the American Revolution Bicentennial,'" and so on. If the ideas seem a little, shall we say, thin and uninspired, that's only because they are. And the authors winningly admit it at once: "This list of suggested activities is by no means complete. Make any changes you feel are necessary," they add in controlled desperation.

The rest of the kit consists of a second equally glossy red, white, and blue brochure, equally full of sound if not fury, entitled "Your Opportunity To Get Involved In The Spirit of '76." It promises, among other things, that "if all of us start now and act together, major steps can be taken by the time of our Bicentennial to begin to solve the energy crisis, and at the same time satisfy our human need for a healthy and pleasing natural environment . . . we can step up the work to eliminate urban blight . . . assure the improved public transportation . . . be a long way down the road toward ending lingering discrimination . . . formulate better plans to educate our Youth . . . help instill deepening respect for Law and Order." All, one assumes, on local initiatives without federal funding, since none is mentioned. Besides these generalities, the kit includes, for some reason, a blank sheet of stationery edged in the national colors and a selection of ad mats of the bicentennial symbol, a fat, blunt-pointed star.

Speaking as an old-time mediologue, an ancient stager in the PR wars, I found all this redolent of bureaucracy, of wasteful, inefficient fuzziness, of, in an awful word, committee work. And so it is. The media kits, disseminated to more than twenty-one thousand broadcast and printed media (down to the level of tiny weekly newspapers) at a cost to you and me of a mere $4.51 per copy, are the creation of the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission, a model of modern Washington bureaucracy. More than a model: a paragon. Since its founding in 1966, the Commission has expended tens of millions of tax dollars without apparent result; so gross did the stink become, in fact, that three congressmen, led by Emanuel Celler, fought for a detailed investigation of the Commission and its operations. Out of this came a plan, endorsed last winter by the President, to reorganize the body, turning it into the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration, whatever that means.

Besides the disillusioned congressmen, the ARBC has been monitored by John Harr, the editor of a New Jersey-based *American Bicentennial Newsletter,* who, from an independent position, has blown the whistle on the unwieldy, leaderless Commission and many of its works. Early and often, Harr has called attention to the "essential unworkability of the Commission structure" and to the ARBC's failure, in the words of the House Judiciary Committee, "to give direction either to itself or to its staff," with the result that it is still engaged in "debating its own

L. E. Sissman's most recent book of poetry is *Pursuit of Honor.*

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role" after six years of existence. He has also ventilated the ARBC's dubious hiring practices—one employee who now earns $33,260 per year was paid $10,512 in his previous job; the politically inspired tendency of the Commission to phase itself out at the end of the second Nixon Administration, rather than continuing its work throughout the entire bicentennial period, which ends with the anniversary of the founding of the Republic in 1989; the scuttling of the so-called "Jonsson Plan," named for the go-getting former mayor of Dallas, which would have translated the bicentennial blarney into real community action in many American cities; and the untrammeled powers given the White House under the bill establishing the new Bicentennial Administration. One congressman asked whether the White House wasn't seeking "absolute and dictatorial powers"; another, Representative Lawrence G. Williams of Pennsylvania, said flatly that "the bill actually establishes a Bicentennial King. . . . It commemorates the revolution to overthrow kings by establishing kings." (Said future king, by the way, was rumored to be one Jeb Stuart Magruder before that gentleman was sucked under by Watergate.)

For all the thrashing and churning in Washington, what is being done for the states and cities that will bear the brunt of the bicentennial planning and the bicentennial throngs? Damn little, apparently. A flat grant of $40,000 a year is being made to each state out of funds raised by selling commemorative medals (a rather dubious-sounding venture which involves $200,000 in advertising expenditures and the hiring of a Baltimore ad agency). This sum is given whether the recipient state is like, say, Connecticut, neck-deep in Revolutionary history, or like Illinois, which, as Harr says, "was populated almost exclusively by Indians 200 years ago." Worse, the cities such as Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, which must expect staggering onslaughts of visitors three years from now, have received zero or negative help from the Commission.

I talked to two senior people in these city programs, most of which are strikingly sensible in scope and far advanced in planning—without a cent of federal aid (with the exception of Philadelphia, whose Mayor Frank Rizzo, a supporter of President Nixon, has been promised a cool $100 million in federal assistance). One administrator said, "The ARBC set up a system of bureaucracy that's not really supportive of the cities and states. It's more of a hindrance than a help. The reputation of the ARBC is so bad that local businesses won't cooperate unless we declare we're a separate organization. So far, everything the ARBC has done has been counterproductive. The one thing they could do is provide money—but there's no provision whatever for impacted cities like ours." The people who are trying to build local dikes to channel the hordes of tourists—and to salvage some works of permanent value for their communities at the same time—are enraged at the ARBC's copious expenditures on a vast national calendar of bicentennial dates and activities and on BINET, a computerized Bicentennial Information Network created, after two years' work, by the ARBC, the National Bureau of Standards, the General Services Administration, and the Computer Science Corporation. "What's happening in Boston on a given day is irrelevant to the planners in Richmond or Washington," one official said. "The whole damn thing's a glorious waste of time and money."

Even the media kits I've mentioned have come under attack. George McDonald, of the Rhode Island Bicentennial Commission, said recently that he'd been trying to build awareness of his own group's work in Rhode Island, and that the ARBC kit simply created confusion among the local media.

Even though the old ARBC is dead and the new ARBA is not yet born, it's amusing, if not very reassuring, to note that the headless bullshit machine grinds on apace. A recent issue of the Bicentennial Newsletter, published by the ARBC and/or its heirs and assigns, calls our attention to a touching recent ceremony in Pittsburgh. On April 26, just as the Watergate fuse sizzled down to its charge, "Mr. and Mrs. David (Julie Nixon) Eisenhower received these patriotism awards in Pittsburgh on behalf of President and Mrs. Nixon as part of the Pittsburgh Committee of '76's first Bicentennial Salute program. The Patriot Award . . . which goes to Mrs. Nixon, is inscribed, '. . . who by her outstanding dedication to American ideals exemplifies the true spirit of the early American patriot.' The New Constellation Award . . . is for President Nixon. It cites the President '. . . for his devotion to the ideals of freedom, a dedication that has kept our New Constellation ever new and bright.' "

I can no more. I'm going to finish this column, encarcel my typewriter, get in my car, and drive on down to the town common to see them celebrate the Fourth. I can hear the sirens of the volunteer fire department now. There'll be a parade of fire trucks (and maybe, if that old fool Joe Gargery, the septic-tank man, feels like it and is liquored up enough, a rather grungy septic-tank-pumping truck), a drum-and-bugle corps, a scattering of veterans in costumes of assorted wars, some more illicit cannon crackers and salutes, a League of Women Voters' flea market, and a bright-red hot dog with bright-yellow ball-park mustard for me to eat and a bottle of cheap, but good, Genesee beer to drink.

Best of all, I can promise you that there won't be a single discouraging word about goals or ideals or a new birth of freedom. Just *moyen-apathétique* Americans eating, guzzling, watching, and generally enjoying themselves.

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93—(top) Arthur Tress, Magnum

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How the war was lost but the wine was won

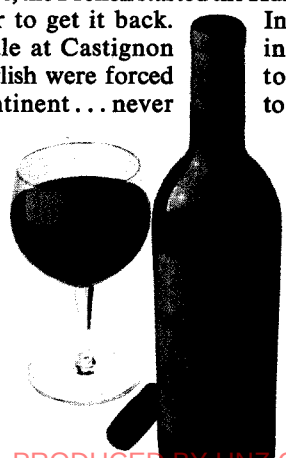
Long, long ago, when knights were bold and kingdoms were personal property, a 15-year-old girl named Eleanor was married to Louis VII, King of France. What she lacked in maturity she made up in her dowry. She was heiress to Aquitaine, an area equal to almost one-quarter of modern France. But even that didn't help, and the marriage was dissolved by the Pope in 1152.

Because she retained her property, Eleanor was very popular and she soon accepted the proposal of Henri Plantaganet, Duke of Anjou. Being a Plantaganet and a descendant of William the Conqueror, it came to pass that Henri became Henry II, King of England.

So, Eleanor, who had been Queen of France at 15, found herself Queen of England at 30. This marriage was successful to the tune of ten children, two of whom became kings. One was Richard the Lion Hearted, of Crusader fame. The other was King John and his best claim to fame was that he was forced to sign the Magna Carta.

Meanwhile, the proud French resented having so large a part of their country being held as personal property of a Queen of England. Especially since Eleanor's lands included the thriving seaport of Bordeaux and all the Bordeaux wine region as well.

Finally, after mulling it over for 100 years, the French started the Hundred Years War to get it back. In a last great battle at Castignon in 1453, the English were forced to leave the Continent . . . never to return.



But, all was not lost.

Before the English evacuated Bordeaux, they made sure they "liberated" all the fine wines maturing in the casks at Chateau D'Issan.

Today, the Chateau is occupied by the Cruse family. And the velvety red wine that bears their name is still worth fighting for. It is a unique wine, made from grapes that grow well in the gravelly soil dating back to a stone age river bed.

Most of the Cruse wines, including the superb Chateau D'Issan, are available in America.

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Every Cruse wine has its own story to tell... it begins when you open the bottle. Cruse

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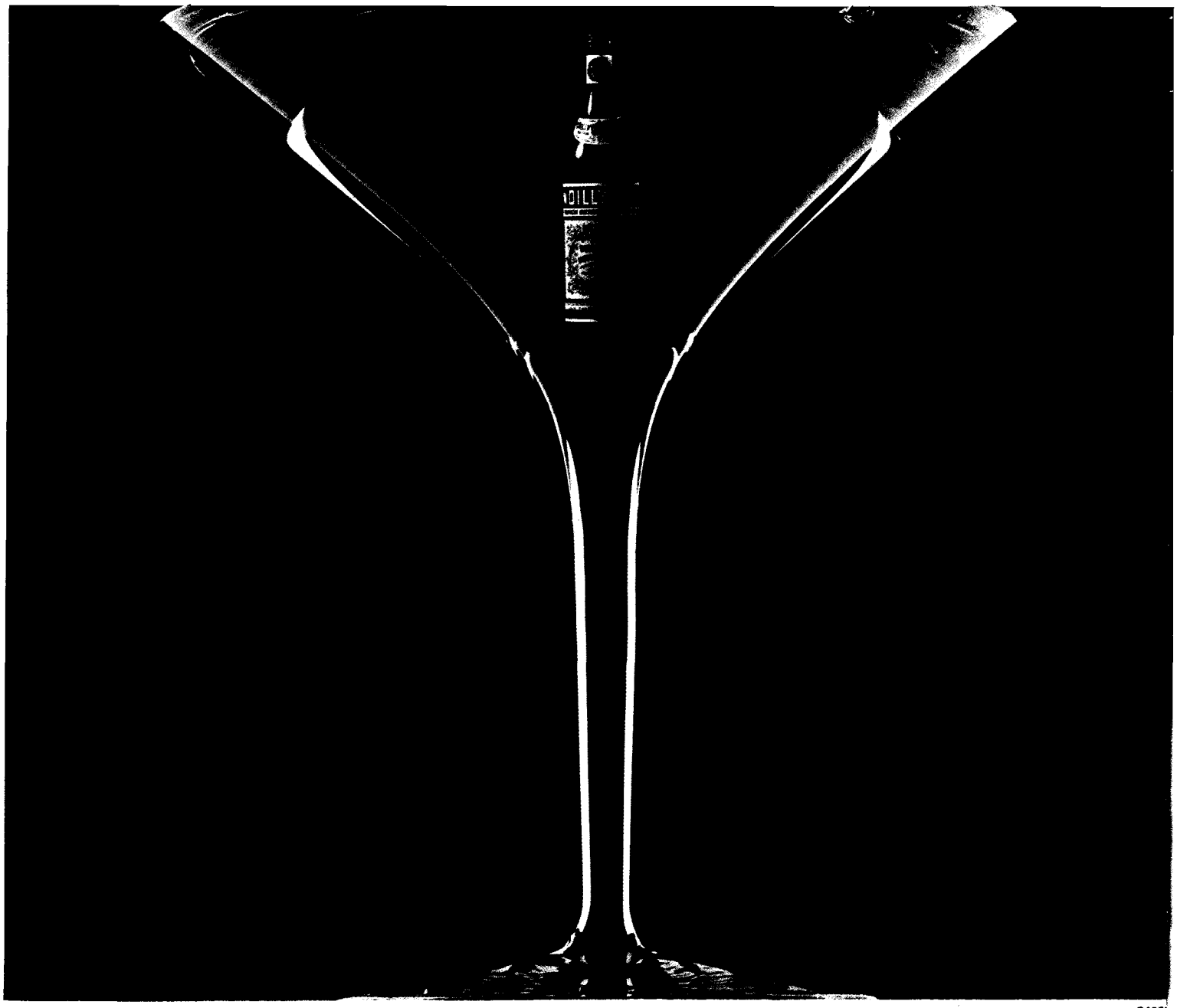

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THE MAIL

THE LABOR MOVEMENT

SIR: Finding hard facts in the long listing of impressions compiled by Wilfrid Sheed and Judith Ramsey ("What Ever Happened to the Labor Movement?" July *Atlantic)* is like finding pieces of fruit in a miser's Christmas cake.

In the case of the Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks, even those "hard facts" were in error. Our union has a membership of 300,000—not, as the article said, 150,000. The BRAC is, in fact, the largest transportation union in the AFL-CIO.

We have not, as the article alleges, lost members—at least so far—as a result of the bankruptcy of six Northeast railroads. That is one reason why BRAC is supporting a program of government ownership of these six railroads—in the hope of preserving services and delaying, if not altogether halting, the imposition of heavy and mindless personnel cuts dictated by the efforts of a few rapacious railroad interests to gobble up profitable trackage in the Northeast and throw the rest away.

The article was suggesting that BRAC is in trouble because the airlines are tough bargainers. They are, indeed; but this year we have succeeded in getting major benefits for our people, without any recourse to strike, at both Western and Northwest Airlines.

BRAC is alive and well, and *The Atlantic*'s inference that its demise is close is greatly exaggerated!

C. L. DENNIS
International President, BRAC
Washington, D.C.

SIR: It is surprising that a reputable magazine such as *The Atlantic* would give so much space to the sophomoric, unintormed, and cynical opinions of Wilfrid Sheed. His article makes it clear that he is anti-worker, anti-democratic, and anti-union.

ELMER L. HAGEMAN
McLean, Va.

SIR: In your "Short Guide to Unionland," you state that the United Electrical Workers union "was ousted from the CIO in 1949 during the McCarthy anti-Communist era." This is not only bad history but a slur on the CIO leadership.

The UE, along with other CIO unions, was ousted a year before Senator Joe McCarthy had entered the anti-Communist lists. The move was led by the late Philip Murray, then president of the CIO, with the energetic assistance of Walter Reuther, James Carey, and other non-Communist labor leaders—none of whom could then or now be accused of any sympathy for McCarthy. Reuther, in fact, was passionately in opposition to McCarthy.

The ouster of unions designated as Communist-dominated by the CIO had been contemplated as far back as the period of the Hitler-Stalin Pact, when these unions struck defense plants in order to prevent the production of weapons for use against Nazi Germany. The CIO finally took action in 1949 after much study and soul-searching. It was the conviction of Murray, Reuther, and the preponderant majority in the CIO that the UE and other such unions were instruments of Stalin's foreign policy and not serving the interests of their members.

RALPH DE TOLEDANO
National News-Research Syndicate
Washington, D.C.

Wilfrid Sheed replies:

Mr. de Toledano's point depends entirely on when you date the beginnings of McCarthyism. Surely nobody still dates it from the Senator himself: that is just one of those tricks of nomenclature, like the naming of this country after Amerigo Vespucci. McCarthyism was certainly in full swing by 1949, as Richard Nixon would be the first to tell you. As to the Senator himself: it was not all that uncommon for people to be vocally against McCarthy, but in that case, it was generally considered wiser to emphasize your personal anti-Communism twice as hard.

STRANGERS KNOCKING

SIR: Though Edith Iglauer gives a clear and concise explanation of Canada's present economic and political position ("The Strangers Next Door," July *Atlantic),* her rash generalizations regarding the "middle-class" life-style in this country are bound to lead Americans to believe "the strangers next door" are stranger and stranger. We Canadians know it isn't all necessarily so.

We don't all ski or skate, we don't all watch football and hockey with a frenzied enthusiasm, we don't all love country music. TV skin flicks are the exception rather than the rule. And one western Canadian journalist who feels Canada

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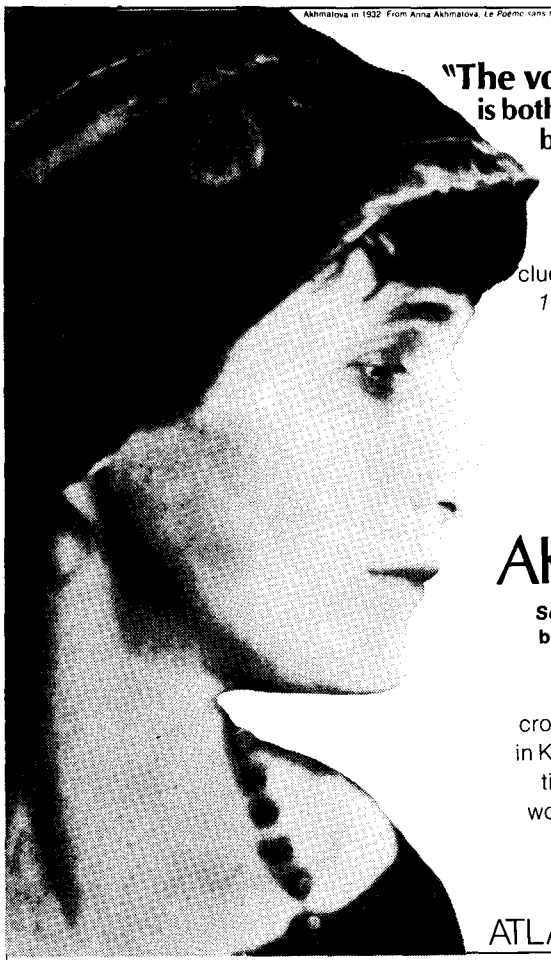

Akhmatova in 1932. From Anna Akhmatova, *Le Poème sans Héros*, trad. Jeanne Rude, Paris, Ed. Seghers, 1970

"The voice of Akhmatova... is both passionate and finished, both reckless and austere."
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Selected, Translated and Introduced by Stanley Kunitz with Max Hayward

"Tragedy did not wither her: it crowned her with majesty. Her life, in Keats's phrase, became "a continual allegory,' its strands interwoven with the story of a people."
—Stanley Kunitz

ATLANTIC-LITTLE, BROWN

would disintegrate as a nation should the United States sink beneath the waves, is not representative of the general feeling toward our country.

VIVIAN MACDONALD
Ottawa, Canada

SIR: "The Strangers Next Door" bears much truth as to our attitudes, and as to how we view our neighbor to the south. However, we have hopefully seen the last vestiges of "Quebec Libre" and its so inappropriately termed "war." I don't believe, however, we view it as a race problem but rather as a diminishing and peacefully correctable cultural evolution.

As to being "middle-class," if it means being able safely to walk our streets; having a governmental system that would rid us quickly of your "bastard *johnconnally*" and "Tricky Dick" types and save us from news management by such as your "Katzenjammer" twins, then pray God we continue to be middle-class, catholic in taste, and still able to hold high our heads.

J. B. HEALY
Toronto, Ontario

SIR: I find it amusing, though not surprising, that Edith Iglauer's "The Strangers Next Door" should have to be so simplistic in order to reach the American reading public. I do not for one second believe that you have in any way underestimated that public's abominable lack of knowledge about Canada, but then does the rapist usually ask the lady's name?

ANTHONY L. REES
Toronto, Ontario

SIR: I am a fairly omnivorous reader, yet I do not think I have ever met a better description of things Canadian than in the article by Edith Iglauer.

I. U. MACLENNAN
Alberta, Canada

SIR: Canada is not colored pink to distinguish it from the United States but to show it is a British Commonwealth country. In fact, it seems to me that the United States is colored green to distinguish it from the British Commonwealth countries.

PHYLLIS KLAIMAN
Montreal, Canada

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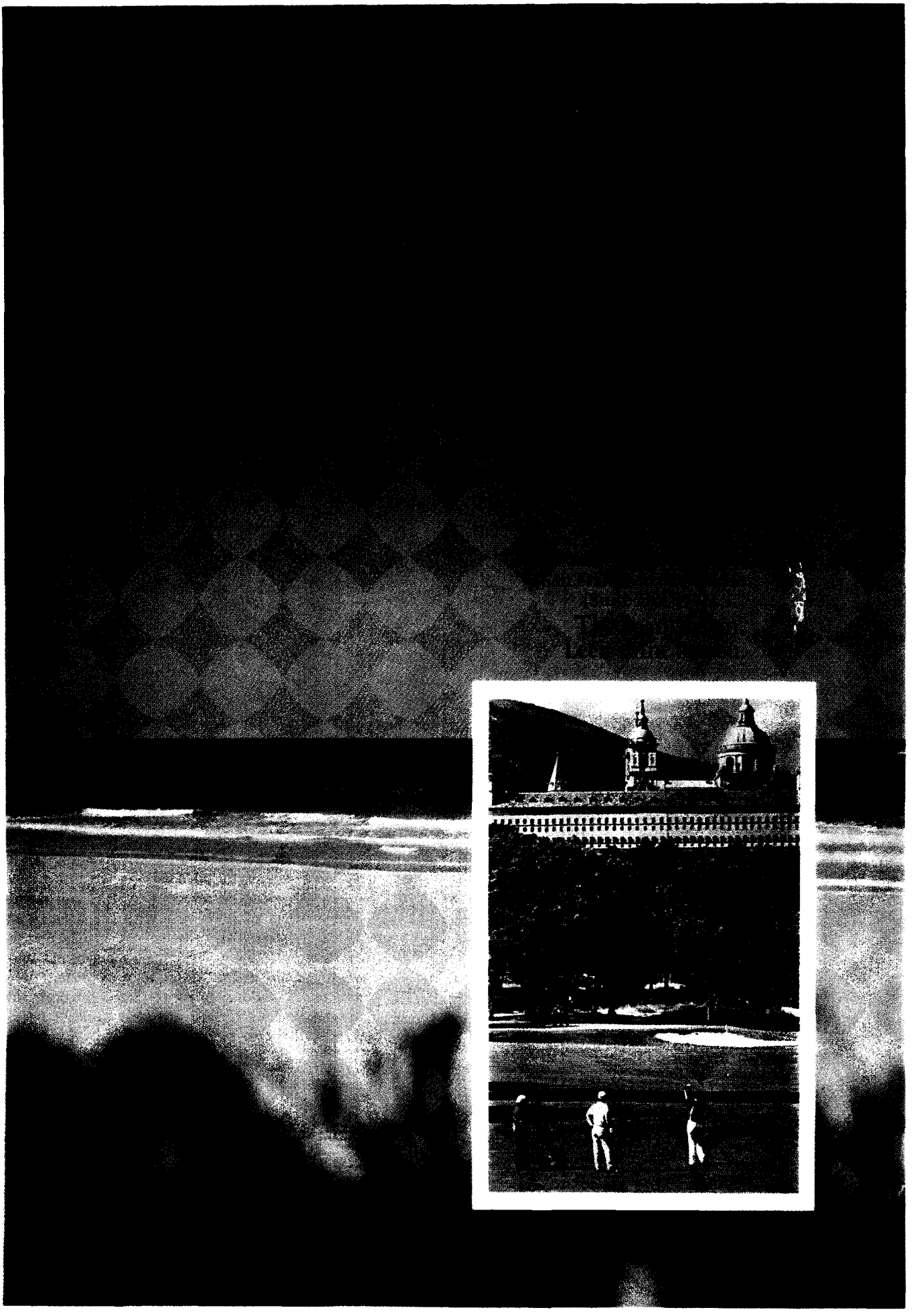

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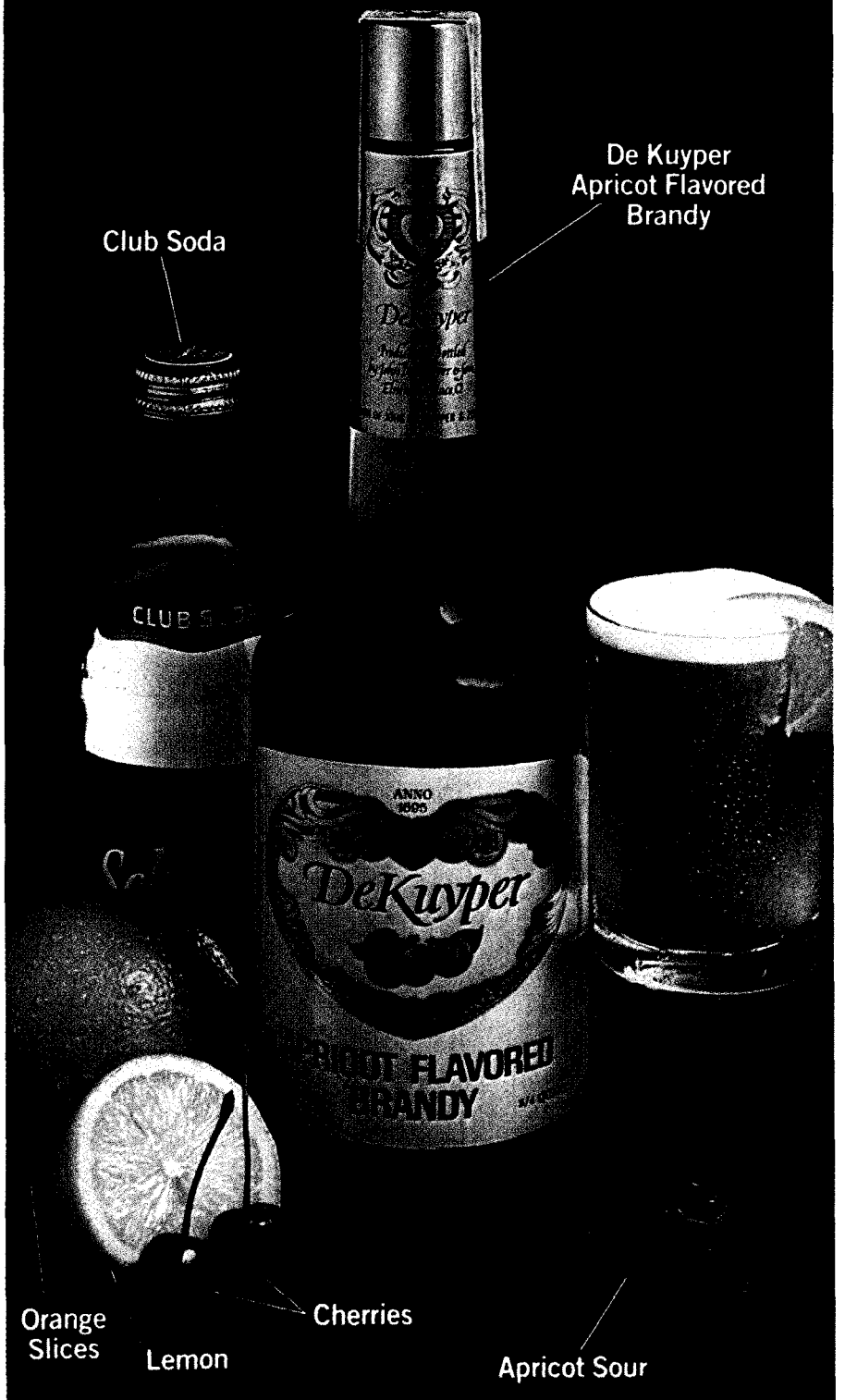

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SIR: Not so long ago an eminent European author remarked that Americans seemed totally incapable of understanding the workings of a constitutional monarchy.

It is astonishing, in "The Strangers Next Door," to see no mention made of our head of state (the Queen), her representative (the Governor General), or that institution which is the linchpin of our political structure (the Crown).

When things go well we sing "God Save the Queen" and when they go badly we fire the Prime Minister.

R. MINGO SWEENEY
Pictou, Nova Scotia

WHAT I MEANT . . .

SIR: In his review of Philip Roth's *The Great American Novel* ("Cheever to Roth to Malamud," June *Atlantic),* John Leonard parenthetically notes:

> (Remember the critic who said on the front page of a prominent literary magazine that *Portnoy's Complaint* was the book "every Jewish writer had wanted to write"? Remember Stanley Edgar Hyman quoting that critic, and then gently asking him in a parenthesis, "Lionel Trilling?" So much for criticism.)

The prominent literary magazine John Leonard seems to be referring to—although few would describe it as such—is the New York *Times* Book Review, whose editor happens to be John Leonard. The critic he seems to be referring to—although I would never confuse the journalistic act of reviewing with the literary exercise of criticism—is me. And the quotation he cites as he compounds an unfortunate Stanley Edgar Hyman misinterpretation is both inaccurate and out of context.

On page two of my review of *Portnoy's Complaint* I wrote that I thought it might be "the very *novel* that every American-Jewish writer has been trying to write in one guise or another since the end of World War II." This came after a front-page discussion of the guilt-ridden American-Jewish heroes flooding the fiction of Salinger and Bellow and Malamud and their authors' search for a form to contain them. Now Lionel Trilling's *The Middle of the Journey* has its ex-

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cellences, but one simply does think of him primarily as a fictionalist struggling with the novel form which was my context; Lionel Trilling is a real critic. So much for book-reviewing editors.

JOSH GREENFIELD
Pacific Palisades, Calif.

John Leonard replies:

Mr. Greenfield doesn't think that the New York *Times* Book Review is a prominent literary magazine. He doesn't think that I should have described him as a critic. He does think that his verbatim quote of a passage I misremembered—and Stanley Edgar Hyman "misinterpreted"—rescues sense from nonsense. He would seem to think that Salinger, Bellow, Malamud, Mailer, Markfield, Faust, Elman, Yurick, et cetera, including novelist Greenfield, all "in one guise or another" have been trying to write *Portnoy's Complaint* since World War II. I disagree.

WHAT PRICE GLORY

SIR: Re: the June Innocent Bystander column. A naturalized American, I have been in America for nearly twenty years, having come here at age ten. In the past twelve years I have been a voracious consumer. I try to buy as much American as I can; and I have yet to purchase something that has not performed as promised. I believe the key is lack of abuse. I have noticed that many Americans reserve their respect for foreign-made goods and give them attentive care while ignoring the American-made counterpart. They are also more willing to pay higher prices for foreign-made than for U.S.-made goods.

The sad fact is that handmaking any object, no matter how small, takes a minimum of three times the time it takes to mass-produce it; the disparity increases as the complexity of the object being made increases. In a country as large as America, with a population so dispersed, it is necessary to practice mass production. The choice is whether we want the few to have excellence or the many to have workable analogues, even if not so excellent. But even the lack of excellence can be questioned as the obsolescence of most

HUNGER IS ALL SHE HAS EVER KNOWN

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You can see from the expression on Margaret's face that she doesn't understand why her mother can't get up, or why her father doesn't come home, or why the dull throb in her stomach won't go away.

What you can't see is that Margaret is dying of malnutrition. She has periods of fainting, her eyes are strangely glazed. Next will come a bloated stomach, falling hair, parched skin. And finally, death from malnutrition, a killer that claims 10,000 lives *every day*.

Meanwhile, in America we eat 4.66 pounds of food a day per person, then throw away enough to feed a family of six in India.

If you were to suddenly join the ranks of 1½ billion people who are forever hungry, your next meal might be a bowl of rice, day after tomorrow a piece of fish the size of a silver dollar, later in the week more rice—maybe.

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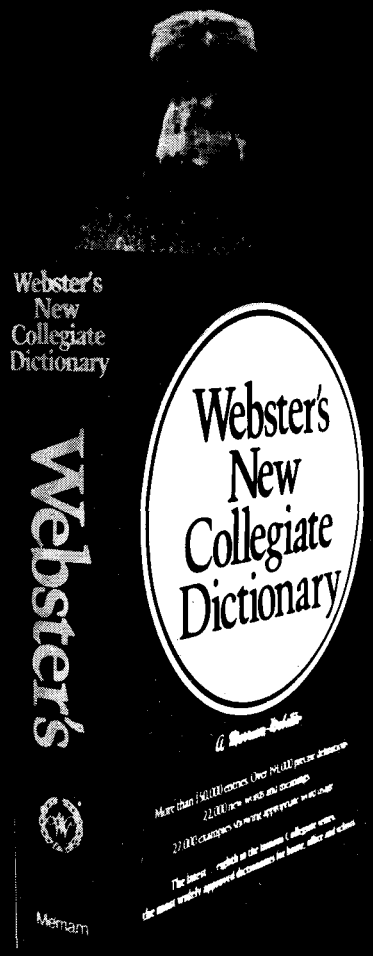

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items is one of mind rather than of fact. Consider that as soon as an "improved" product reaches the market, there is a rush to replace the still functional original.

The foreign-made object seldom becomes obsolete, as its "snob appeal" endears it to its owner; and it is often kept beyond its functional life. With the generosity so typical of Americans, would it be too much to ask that we turn that generosity toward ourselves—not by demeaning the foreign-made, but by making fair appraisals of all factors involved? This is the best country on earth because it recognizes that everyone's labor should be justly remunerated. If our price to pay for this is inability to compete with foreign production on a cost level, it is a small price.

MARY POVAZSAY
Inglewood, Calif.

L. E. Sissman replies:

I sympathize with Ms. Povazsay's sympathy for her adoptive country. In fact, that's why I wrote the article: I was, and am, deeply concerned that a race famed for its manual dexterity and ingenuity should lose both to the exigencies of mass marketing.

However, I'd be remiss if I did not note that Ms. Povazsay stands alone, among hundreds of Americans I know, in her statement that she has "yet to purchase something that has not performed as promised." Is there anyone else out there who has never bought a lemon?

Further, Ms. Povazsay states that "the obsolescence of most items is one of mind rather than of fact. . . . As soon as an 'improved' product reaches the market, there is a rush to replace the still functional original." In other words, she says, the excellence of mass-produced American products is seldom tested by extended use. I'd submit that it *is* tested, and found wanting, by the frequent need for service and the lack of adequate service work, which leads to more frequent trade-ins. Also, the American public does not simply and spontaneously rush out to buy the new and jettison the old; rather, it is carefully conditioned to do so by massive advertising campaigns—campaigns whose high cost is invariably built into the end cost of the product. All this is part and parcel of the economic system under which "the best country on earth" operates.

Perhaps, like Leopold Tyrmand, Ms. Povazsay is impatient with us native Americans for our inability to see the *relatively* greater equity and freedom of our country as compared with, say, the Iron Curtain countries. True; but hardly justification for looking on all American institutions, ways, and deeds with a Pollyanna eye.

ADVICE AND CONSENT

SIR: I have been reading the Mail in recent issues of *The Atlantic* and am dismayed at the lack of appreciation displayed in some of these letters—for the excellence and high standards maintained in your poetry department. W. S. Merwin's fascinating poem ("Speakers of the Word for Heaven," February *Atlantic)* was not only beautiful, it was haunting to the point of chills!

Then I discovered a poem by Ann Stanford—"Prophet" (June *Atlantic)*—which is so good that it reminds us of what poetry *can* be.

Please, do not listen to gnat mentalities that try to shape *The Atlantic* after themselves. The more you try to please them, the less they will be pleased.

JESSIE T. ELLISON
Daytona Beach, Fla.

SIR: I wish to commend *The Atlantic* for publishing "A Family Affair" by John L'Heureux in the June issue. Though the story contains shades of Oates at her best (characters that evoke no particular empathy), the content is more concise and speaks without ambiguity.

In the same issue, Donald Barthelme's fantasy "At the End of the Mechanical Age" strikes just the right balance of contrasting styles. Please keep the short story form alive and well with its steady appearance between your covers.

SALLI GIRARD
Los Angeles, Calif.

The Atlantic welcomes communications from readers, but can rarely accommodate letters in excess of 500 words. Light editing, for style and economy, is the rule rather than the exception, and we assume that any letter, unless stipulated, is free for publication in our letters column.

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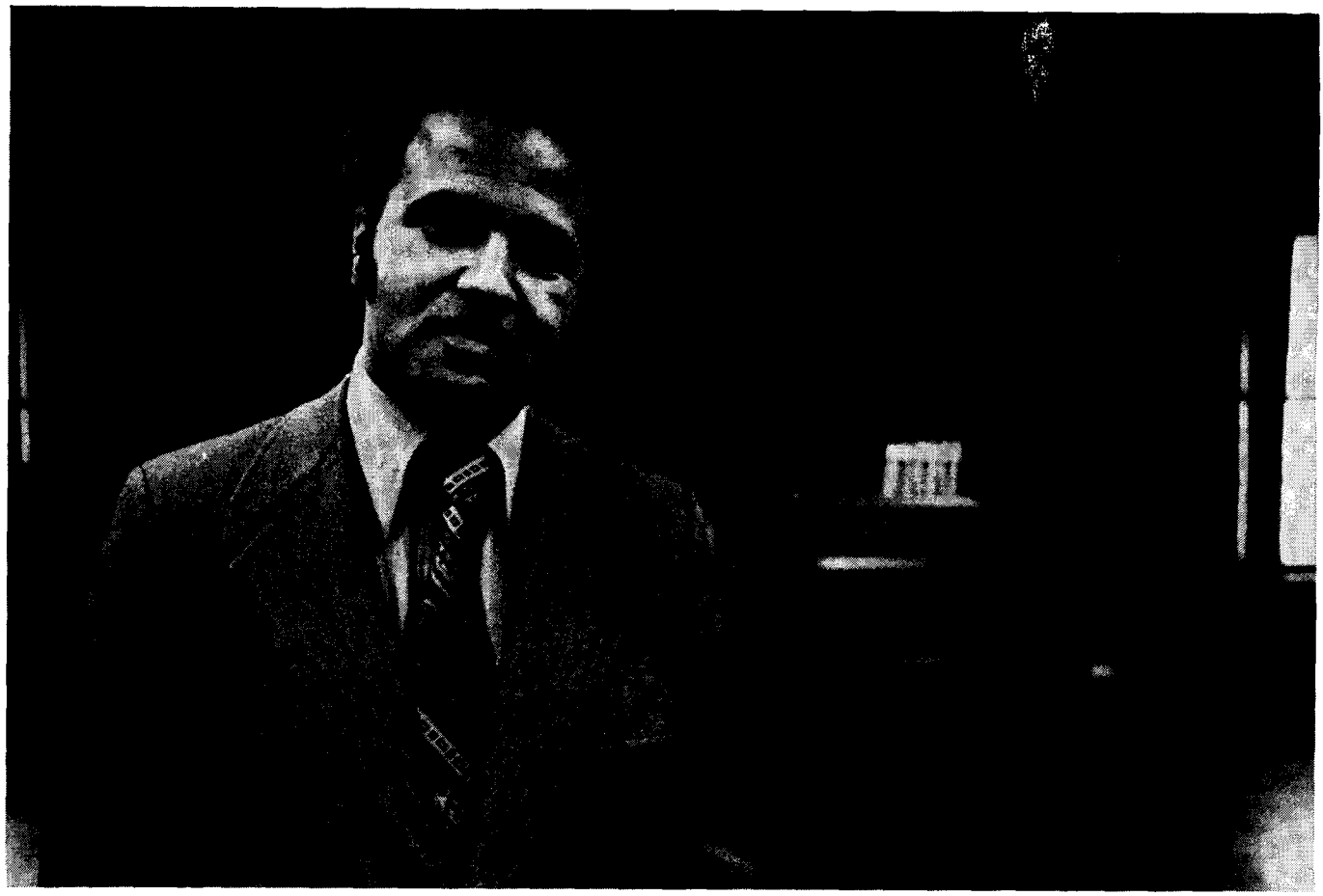

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ELLIS E. REID

HOME: Chicago

AGE: 38

PROFESSION: Attorney

HOBBIES: Art, travel, good restaurants.

LAST BOOK READ: "The Exorcist"

LAST ACCOMPLISHMENT: Elected President Cook County Bar Association (second term). Started scholarship fund for minority law students. Directs a lawyer's reference plan for the poor.

QUOTE: "The Law must be available to all. For study, for protection, for justice. Working for those goals has made being an attorney more rewarding than I had ever hoped."

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THE Atlantic
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HISTORY AS MIRROR

by Barbara W. Tuchman

Doomsayers ride high, and understandably so, in the final decades of the twentieth century. But here a Pulitzer Prize-winning historian draws from the past a message of hope: Man, as he's done before, will muddle through his time of dismay and disarray.

At a time when everyone's mind is on the explosions of the moment, it might seem obtuse of me to discuss the fourteenth century. But I think a backward look at that disordered, violent, bewildered, disintegrating, and calamity-prone age can be consoling and possibly instructive in a time of similar disarray. Reflected in a six-hundred-year-old mirror, a more revealing image of ourselves and our species might be seen than is visible in the clutter of circumstances under our noses. The value of historical comparison was made keenly apparent to the French medievalist, Edouard Perroy, when he was writing his book on the Hundred Years' War while dodging the Gestapo in World War II. "Certain ways of behavior," he wrote, "certain reactions against fate, throw mutual light upon each other."

Besides, if one suspects that the twentieth century's record of inhumanity and folly represents a phase of mankind at its worst, and that our last decade of collapsing assumptions has been one of unprecedented discomfort, it is reassuring to discover that the human race has been in this box before—and emerged. The historian has the comfort of knowing that man (meaning, here and hereafter, the species, not the sex) is always capable of his worst; has indulged in it, painfully struggled up from it, slid back, and gone on again.

In what follows, the parallels are not always in physical events but rather in the effect on society, and sometimes in both.

The afflictions of the fourteenth century were the classic riders of the Apocalypse—famine, plague, war, and death, this time on a black horse. These combined to produce an epidemic of violence, depopulation, bad government, oppressive taxes, an accelerated breakdown of feudal bonds, working class insurrection, monetary crisis, decline of morals and rise in crime, decay of chivalry, the governing idea of the governing class, and above all, corruption of society's central institution, the Church, whose loss of authority and prestige deprived man of his accustomed guide in a darkening world.

Yet amidst the disintegration were sprouting, invisible to contemporaries, the green shoots of the Renaissance to come. In human affairs as in nature, decay is compost for new growth.

Some medievalists reject the title of decline for

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the fourteenth century, asserting instead that it was the dawn of a new age. Since the processes obviously overlap, I am not sure that the question is worth arguing, but it becomes poignantly interesting when applied to ourselves. Do *we* walk amidst trends of a new world without knowing it? How far ahead is the dividing line? Or are we on it? What designation will our age earn from historians six hundred years hence? One wishes one could make a pact with the devil like Enoch Soames, the neglected poet in Max Beerbohm's story, allowing us to return and look ourselves up in the library catalogue. In that future history book, shall we find the chapter title for the twentieth century reading Decline and Fall, or Eve of Revival?

The fourteenth century opened with a series of famines brought on when population growth outstripped the techniques of food production. The precarious balance was tipped by a series of heavy rains and floods and by a chilling of the climate in what has been called the Little Ice Age. Upon a people thus weakened fell the century's central disaster, the Black Death, an eruption of bubonic plague which swept the known world in the years 1347-1349 and carried off an estimated one-third of the population in two and a half years. This makes it the most lethal episode known to history, which is of some interest to an age equipped with the tools of overkill.

The plague raged at terrifying speed, increasing the impression of horror. In a given locality it accomplished its kill within four to six months, except in the larger cities, where it struck again in spring after lying dormant in winter. The death rate in Avignon was said to have claimed half the population, of whom ten thousand were buried in the first six weeks in a single mass grave. The mortality was in fact erratic. Some communities whose last survivors fled in despair were simply wiped out and disappeared from the map forever, leaving only a grassed-over hump as their mortal trace.

Whole families died, leaving empty houses and property a prey to looters. Wolves came down from the mountains to attack plague-stricken villages, crops went unharvested, dikes crumbled, salt water reinvaded and soured the lowlands, the forest crept back, and second growth, with the awful energy of nature unchecked, reconverted cleared land to waste. For lack of hands to cultivate, it was thought impossible that the world could ever regain its former prosperity.

Once the dark bubonic swellings appeared in armpit and groin, death followed rapidly within one to three days, often overnight. For lack of gravediggers, corpses piled up in the streets or were buried so hastily that dogs dug them up and ate them. Doctors were helpless, and priests lacking to administer the final sacrament so that people died believing they must go to hell. No bells tolled, the dead were buried without prayers or funeral rites or tears; families did not weep for the loss of loved ones, for everyone expected death. Matteo Villani, taking up the chronicle of Florence from the hand of his dead brother, believed he was recording the "extermination of mankind."

People reacted variously, as they always do: some prayed, some robbed, some tried to help, most fled if they could, others abandoned themselves to debauchery on the theory that there would be no tomorrow. On balance, the dominant reaction was fear and a desire to save one's own skin regardless of the closest ties. "A father did not visit his son, nor the son his father; charity was dead," wrote one physician, and that was not an isolated observation. Boccaccio in his famous account reports that "kinsfolk held aloof, brother was forsaken by brother . . . often times husband by wife; nay what is more, and scarcely to be believed, fathers and mothers were found to abandon their own children to their fate, untended, unvisited as if they had been strangers."

"Men grew bold," wrote another chronicler, "in their indulgence in pleasure. . . . No fear of God or law of man deterred a criminal. Seeing that all perished alike, they reflected that offenses against human or Divine law would bring no punishment for no one would live long enough to be held to account." This is an accurate summary, but it was written by Thucydides about the Plague of Athens in the fifth century B.C.—which indicates a certain permanence of human behavior.

The nightmare of the plague was compounded for the fourteenth century by the awful mystery of its cause. The idea of disease carried by insect bite was undreamed of. Fleas and rats, which were in fact the carriers, are not mentioned in the plague writings. Contagion could be observed but not explained and thus seemed doubly sinister. The medical faculty of the University of Paris favored a theory of poisonous air spread by a conjunction of the planets, but the general and fundamental belief, made official by a papal bull, was that the pestilence was divine punishment for man's sins. Such horror could only be caused by the wrath of God. "In the year of our Lord, 1348," sadly wrote a professor of law at the University of Pisa, "the hostility of God was greater than the hostility of men."

That belief enhanced the sense of guilt, or rather the consciousness of sin (guilt, I suspect, is modern; sin is medieval), which was always so close to

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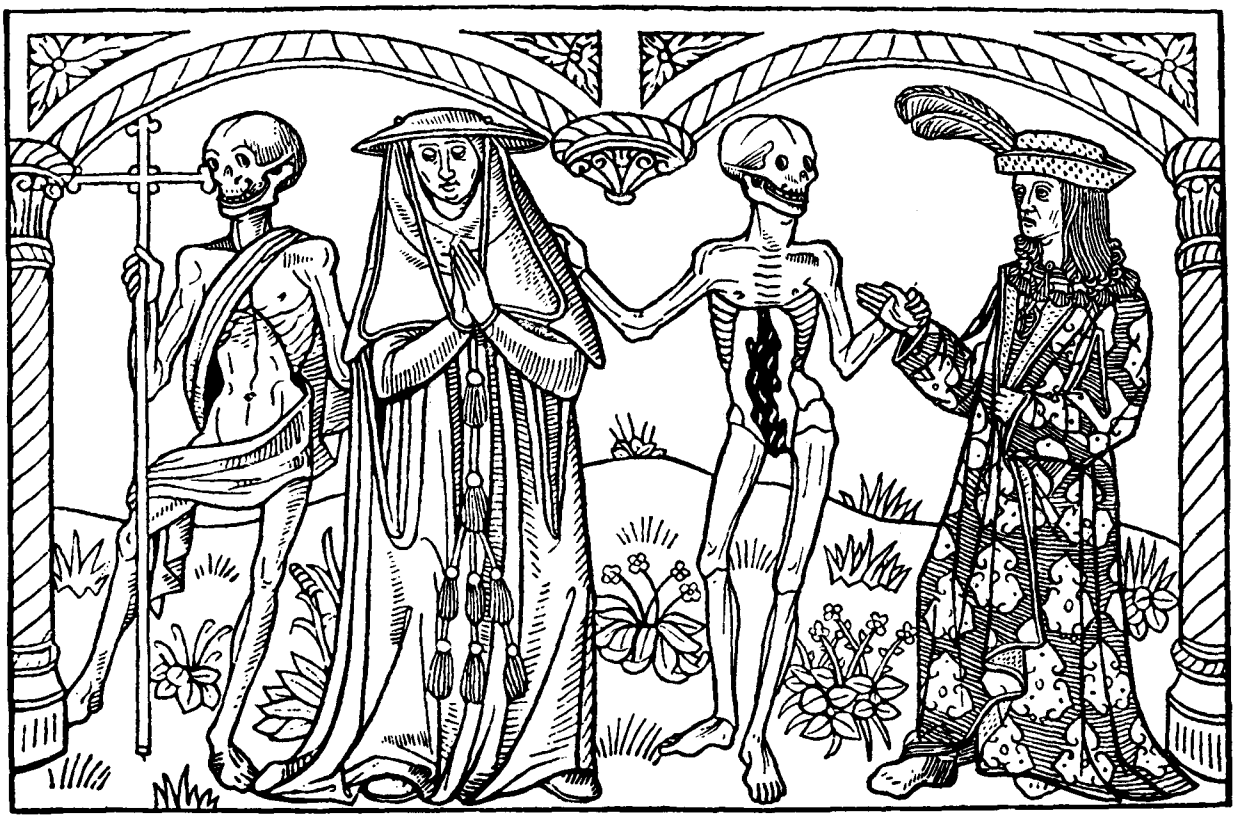

the surface throughout the Middle Ages. Out of the effort to appease divine wrath came the flagellants, a morbid frenzy of self-punishment that almost at once found a better object in the Jews.

A storm of pogroms followed in the track of the Black Death, widely stimulated by the flagellants, who often rushed straight for the Jewish quarter, even in towns which had not yet suffered the plague. As outsiders within the unity of Christendom the Jews were natural persons to suspect of evil design on the Christian world. They were accused of poisoning the wells. Although the Pope condemned the attacks as inspired by "that liar the devil," pointing out that Jews died of plague like everyone else, the populace wanted victims, and fell upon them in three hundred communities throughout Europe. Slaughtered and burned alive, the entire colonies of Frankfurt, Cologne, Mainz, and other towns of Germany and the Lowlands were exterminated, despite the restraining efforts of town authorities. Elsewhere the Jews were expelled by judicial process after confession of well-poisoning was extracted by torture. In every case their goods and property, whether looted or confiscated, ended in the hands of the persecutors. The process was lucrative, as it was to be again in our time under the Nazis, although the fourteenth century had no gold teeth to rob from the corpses. Where survivors slowly returned and the communities revived, it was on worse terms than before and in walled isolation. This was the beginning of the ghetto.

Men of the fourteenth century were particularly vulnerable because of the loss of credibility by the Church, which alone could absolve sin and offer salvation from hell. When the papal schism dating from 1378 divided the Church under two popes, it brought the highest authority in society into disrepute, a situation with which we are familiar. The schism was the second great calamity of the time, displaying before all the world the unedifying spectacle of twin vicars of God, each trying to bump the other off the chair of St. Peter, each appointing his own college of cardinals, each collecting tithes and revenues and excommunicating the partisans of his rival. No conflict of ideology was involved; the split arose from a simple squabble for the office of the papacy and remained no more than that for the fifty years the schism lasted. Plunged in this scandal, the Church lost moral authority, the more so as its two halves scrambled in the political arena for support. Kingdoms, principalities, even towns, took sides, finding new cause for the endless wars that scourged the times.

The Church's corruption by worldiness long antedated the schism. By the fourteenth century the papal court at Avignon was called Babylon and rivaled temporal courts in luxury and magnificence. Its bureaucracy was enormous and its upkeep mired in a commercial traffic in spiritual things. Pardons, indulgences, prayers, every benefice and bishopric, everything the Church had or was, from cardinal's hat to pilgrim's relic, everything that represented man's relation to God, was for sale. Today it is the processes of government that are for sale, especially the electoral process, which is as vital to our political security as salvation was to the emotional security of the fourteenth century.

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Men still craved God and spun off from the Church in sects and heresies, seeking to purify the realm of the spirit. They too yearned for a greening of the system. The yearning, and disgust with the Establishment, produced freak orders of mystics who lived in coeducational communes, rejected marriage, and glorified sexual indulgence. Passionate reformers ranged from St. Catherine of Siena, who scolded everyone in the hierarchy from the popes down, to John Wycliffe, who plowed the soil of Protestant revolt. Both strove to renew the Church, which for so long had been the only institution to give order and meaning to the untidy business of living on earth. When in the last quarter of the century the schism brought the Church into scorn and ridicule and fratricidal war, serious men took alarm. The University of Paris made strenuous and ceaseless efforts to find a remedy, finally demanding submission of the conflict to a supreme Council of the Church whose object should be not only reunification but reform.

Without reform, said the University's theologians in their letter to the popes, the damaging effect of the current scandal could be irreversible. In words that could have been addressed to our own secular potentate although he is—happily—not double, they wrote, "The Church will suffer for your overconfidence if you repent too late of having neglected reform. If you postpone it longer the harm will be incurable. Do you think people will suffer forever from your bad government? Who do you think can endure, amid so many other abuses . . . your elevation of men without literacy or virtue to the most eminent positions?" The echo sounds over the gulf of six hundred years with a timeliness almost supernatural.

When the twin popes failed to respond, pressure at last brought about a series of Church councils which endeavored to limit and constitutionalize the powers of the papacy. After a thirty-year struggle, the councils succeeded in ending the schism but the papacy resisted reform. The decades of debate only served to prove that the institution could not be reformed from within. Eighty years of mounting protest were to pass before pressure produced Luther and the great crack.

Despite the parallel with the present struggle between Congress and the presidency, there is no historical law that says the outcome must necessarily be the same. The American presidency at age two hundred is not a massive rock of ages embedded in a thousand years of acceptance as was the medieval Church, and should be easier to reform. One can wish for Congress a better result than the councils had in the effort to curb the executive—or at least one can hope.

The more important parallel lies in the decay of public confidence in our governing institutions, as the fourteenth-century public lost confidence in the Church. Who believes today in the integrity of government?—or of business, or of law or justice or labor unions or the military or the police? Even physicians, the last of the admired, are now in disfavor. I have a theory that the credibility vacuum owes something to our nurture in that conspiracy of fables called advertising, which we daily absorb without believing. Since public affairs and ideas and candidates are now presented to us as a form of advertising, we automatically suspend belief or suspect fraud as soon as we recognize the familiar slickness. I realize, of course, that the roots of disbelief go down to deeper ground. Meanwhile the effect is a loss of trust in all authority which leaves us guideless and dismayed and cynical—even as in the fourteenth century.

Over that whole century hung the smoke of war—dominated by the Anglo-French conflict known to us, though fortunately not to them, as the Hundred Years' War. (With the clock still ticking in Indochina, one wonders how many years there are still to go in that conflict.) Fought on French soil and extending into Flanders and Spain, the Hundred Years' War actually lasted for more than a century, from 1337 to 1453. In addition, the English fought the Scots; the French fought incessant civil wars against Gascons, Bretons, Normans, and Navarrese; the Italian republics fought each other—Florence against Pisa, Venice against Genoa, Milan against everybody; the kingdom of Naples and Sicily was fought over by claimants from Hungary to Aragon; the papacy fought a war that included unbridled massacre to reconquer the Papal States; the Savoyards fought the Lombards; the Swiss fought the Austrians; the tangled wars of Bohemia, Poland, and the German Empire defy listing; crusades were launched against the Saracens, and to fill up any pauses the Teutonic Knights conducted annual campaigns against pagan Lithuania which other knights could join for extra practice. Fighting was the function of the Second Estate, that is, of the landed nobles and knights. A knight without a war or tournament to go to felt as restless as a man who cannot go to the office.

Every one of these conflicts threw off Free Companies of mercenaries, organized for brigandage under a professional captain, which became an evil of the period as malignant as the plague. In the money economy of the fourteenth century, armed forces were no longer feudal levies serving under a vassal's obligation who went home after forty days, but were recruited bodies who served for pay. Since this was at great cost to the sovereign, he cut off the payroll as soon as he safely could during halts of truce or negotiation. Thrown on their own resources and having acquired a taste for plunder, the men-at-arms banded together in the Free Companies, whose savage success swelled their ranks

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with landless knights and squires and roving adventurers.

The companies contracted their services to whatever ruler was in need of troops, and between contracts held up towns for huge ransom, ravaged the countryside, and burned, pillaged, raped, and slaughtered their way back and forth across Europe. No one was safe, no town or village knew when it might be attacked. The leaders, prototypes of the *condottieri* in Italy, became powers and made fortunes and even became respectable like Sir John Hawkwood, commander of the famous White Company. Smaller bands, called in France the *tards-venus* (latecomers), scavenged like jackals, living off the land, plundering, killing, carrying off women, torturing peasants for their small horde of grain or townsmen for their hidden goods, and burning, always burning. They set fire to whatever they left behind, farmhouses, vineyards, abbeys, in a kind of madness to destroy the very sources off which they lived, or would live tomorrow. Destruction and cruelty became self-engendering, not merely for loot but almost one might say for sport. The phenomenon is not peculiar to any one time or people, as we know from the experience of our own century, but in the fourteenth century it seems to have reached a degree and extent beyond explanation.

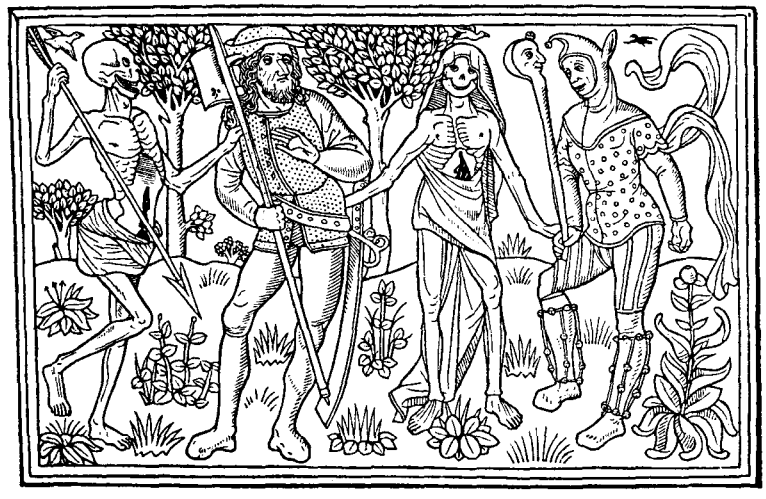
It must be added that in practice and often personnel the Free Companies were hardly distinguishable from the troops of organized official wars. About 80 percent of the activity of a declared war consisted of raids of plunder and burning through enemy territory. That paragon of chivalry, the Black Prince, could well have earned his name from the blackened ruins he left across France. His baggage train and men-at-arms were often so heavily laden with loot that they moved as slowly as a woman's litter.

The saddest aspect of the Hundred Years' War was the persistent but vain efforts of the belligerents themselves to stop it. As in our case, it spread political damage at home, and the cost was appalling. Moreover it harmed the relations of all the powers at a time when they were anxious to unite to repel the infidel at the gates. For Christendom was now on the defensive against the encroaching Turks. For that reason the Church, too, tried to end the war that was keeping Europe at odds. On the very morning of the fatal battle of Poitiers, two cardinals hurried with offers and counter-offers between the two armed camps, trying in vain to prevent the clash. During periods of truce the parties held long parleys lasting months and sometimes years in the effort to negotiate a definitive peace. It always eluded them, failing over questions of prestige, or put off by the feeling of whichever side held a slight advantage that one more push would bring the desired gains.

All this took place under a code of chivalry whose creed was honor, loyalty, and courtesy and whose purpose, like that of every social code evolved by man in his long search for order, was to civilize and supply a pattern of rules. A knight's task under the code was to uphold the Church, defend his land and vassals, maintain the peace of his province, protect the weak and guard the poor from injustice, shed his blood for his comrade, and lay down his life if needs must. For the land-owning warrior class, chivalry was their ideology, their politics, their system—what democracy is to us or Marxism to the Communists.

Originating out of feudal needs, it was already slipping into anachronism by the fourteenth century because the development of monarchy and a royal bureaucracy was taking away the knight's functions, economic facts were forcing him to commute labor dues for money, and a rival element was appearing in the urban magnates. Even his military prowess was being nullified by trained bodies of English longbowmen and Swiss pikemen, nonmembers of the warrior class who in feudal theory had no business in battle at all.

Yet in decadence chivalry threw its brightest light; never were its ceremonies more brilliant, its jousts and tournaments so brave, its apparel so splendid, its manners so gay and amorous, its entertainments so festive, its self-glorification more eloquent. The gentry elaborated the forms of chivalry just *because* institutions around them were



crumbling. They clung to what gave their status meaning in a desperate embrace of the past. This is the time when the Order of the Garter was founded by the King of England, the Order of the Star by the King of France, the Golden Fleece by the Duke of Burgundy—in deliberate imitation of King Arthur's Knights of the Round Table.

The rules still worked well enough among themselves, with occasional notorious exceptions such as Charles of Navarre, a bad man appropriately known as Charles the Bad. Whenever necessity re-

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quired him to swear loyal reconciliation and fealty to the King of France, his mortal enemy, he promptly engaged in treacherous intrigues with the King of England, leaving his knightly oaths to become, in the White House word, inoperative. On the whole, however, the nobility laid great stress on high standards of honor. It was vis-à-vis the Third Estate that chivalry fell so far short of the theory. Yet it remained an ideal of human relations, as Christianity remained an ideal of faith, that kept men reaching for the unattainable. The effort of society is always toward order, away from anarchy. Sometimes it moves forward, sometimes it slips back. Which is the direction of one's own time may be obscure.

The fourteenth century was further afflicted by a series of convulsions and upheavals in the working class, both urban and rural. Causes were various: the cost of constant war was thrown upon the people in hearth taxes, salt taxes, sales taxes, and debasement of coinage. In France the failure of the knights to protect the populace from incessant ravaging was a factor. It exasperated the peasants' misery, giving it the energy of anger which erupted in the ferocious mid-century rising called the *Jacquerie.* Shortage of labor caused by the plague had temporarily brought higher wages and rising expectations. When these were met, especially in England, by statutes clamping wages at pre-plague levels, the result was the historic Peasants' Revolt of 1381. In the towns, capitalism was widening the gap between masters and artisans, producing the sustained weavers' revolts in the cloth towns of Flanders and major outbreaks in Florence and Paris. In Paris, too, the merchant class rose against the royal councillors, whom they despised as both corrupt and incompetent. To frighten the regent into submission, they murdered his two chief councillors in his presence.

All these struggles had one thing in common: they were doomed. United against a common threat, the ruling class could summon greater strength than its antagonists and acted to suppress insurrection with savagery equal to the fury from below. Yet discontent had found its voice; dissent and rejection of authority for the first time in the Middle Ages became a social force. Demagogues and determined leaders, reformers and agitators came to the surface. Though all were killed, several by mobs of their own followers, the uprisings they led were the beginning of modern, conscious, class war.

Meanwhile, over the second half-century, the plague returned with lesser virulence at intervals of every twelve to fifteen years. It is hardly to be wondered that people of the time saw man's fate as an endless succession of evils. He must indeed be wicked and his enemy Satan finally triumphant. According to a popular belief at the end of the century, no one since the beginning of the schism had entered Paradise.

Pessimism was a mark of the age and the *Danse Macabre* or Dance of Death its most vivid expression. Performed at occasions of popular drama and public sermons, it was an actual dance or pantomime in which a figure from every walk of life—king, clerk, lawyer, friar, goldsmith, bailiff, and so on—confronts the loathsome corpse he must become. In the accompanying verses and illustrations which have survived, the theme repeats itself over and over: the end of all life is putrefaction and the grave; no one escapes; no matter what beauty or kingly power or poor man's misery has been the lot in life, all end alike as food for worms. Death is not treated poetically as the soul's flight to reunion with God; it is a skeleton grinning at the vanity of life.

Life as well as death was viewed with disgust. The vices and corruptions of the age, a low opinion of one's fellowmen, and nostalgia for the well-ordered past were the favorite themes of literary men. Even Boccaccio in his later works became ill-tempered. "All good customs fail," laments Christine de Pisan of France, "and virtues are held at little worth." Eustache Deschamps complains that "the child of today has become a ruffian. . . . People are gluttons and drunkards, haughty of heart, caring for nought, not honor nor goodness nor kindness . . ." and he ends each verse with the refrain, "Time past had virtue and righteousness but today reigns only vice." In England John Gower denounces Rome for simony, Lollards for heresy, clergy and monks for idleness and lust, kings, nobles, and knights for self-indulgence and rapine, the law for bribery, merchants for usury and fraud, the commons for ignorance, and in general the sins of perjury, lechery, avarice, and pride as displayed in extravagant fashions.

These last did indeed, as in all distracted times, reflect a reaching for the absurd, especially in the long pointed shoes which kept getting longer until the points had to be tied up around the knee, and the young men's doublets which kept getting shorter until they revealed the buttocks, to the censure of moralists and snickers of the crowd. Leaving miniskirts to the males, the ladies inexplicably adopted a fashion of gowns and posture designed to make them look pregnant.

Self-disgust, it seems to me, has reappeared in our time, not without cause. The succession of events since 1914 has disqualified belief in moral progress, and pollution of the physical world is our bubonic plague. Like the fourteenth century, we have lost confidence in man's capacity to control his fate and even in his capacity to be good. So we have a literature of the anti-hero aimlessly wandering among the perverse, absurd, and depraved; we have porn and pop and blank canvases and anti-

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music designed to deafen. I am not sure whether in all this the artists are expressing contempt for their fellowman or the loud laugh that bespeaks emptiness of feeling, but whatever the message, it has a faint ring of the *Danse Macabre.*

Historians until recently have hurried over the fourteenth century because like most people they prefer not to deal with failure. But it would be a mistake to imply that it was solid gloom. Seen from inside, especially from a position of privilege, it had beauties and wonders, and the ferment itself was exciting. "In these fifty years," said the renowned Comte de Foix to the chronicler Froissart in the year 1389, "there have been more feats of arms and more marvels in the world than in the three hundred years before." The Count himself, a famous huntsman, was known as Phoebus for his personal beauty and splendid court.

The streets of cities were bright with colored clothes; crimson fur-lined gowns of merchants, parti-colored velvets and silks of a nobleman's retinue, in sky blue and fawn or two shades of scarlet or it might be the all-emerald liveries of the Green Count of Savoy. Street sounds were those of human voices: criers of news and official announcements, shopkeepers in their doorways and itinerant vendors crying fresh eggs, charcoal at a penny a sack, candlewicks "brighter than the stars," cakes and waffles, mushrooms, hot baths. Mountebanks entertained the public in the town square or village green with tricks and magic and trained animals. Jongleurs sang ballads of adventure in Saracen lands. After church on Sundays, laborers gathered in cookshops and taverns; burghers promenaded in their gardens or visited their vineyards outside the city walls. Church bells marked the eight times of day from Matins through Vespers, when shops closed, work ceased, silence succeeded bustle, and the darkness of unlit night descended.

The gaudy extravagance of noble life was awesome. Now and then its patronage brought forth works of eternal beauty like the exquisite illuminated Books of Hours commissioned by the Duc de Berry. More often it was pure ostentation and conspicuous consumption. Charles V of France owned forty-seven jeweled and golden crowns and sixty-three complete sets of chapel furnishings, including vestments, gold crucifixes, altarpieces, reliquaries, and prayer books. Jewels and cloth of gold marked every occasion and every occasion was pretext for a spectacle—a grand procession, or ceremonial welcome to a visiting prince, a tournament or entertainment with music, and dancing by the light of great torches. When Gian Galeazzo Visconti, ruler of Milan, gave a wedding banquet for his daughter, eighteen double courses were served, each of fish and meat, including trout, quail, herons, eels, sturgeon, and suckling pig spouting fire. The gifts presented after *each* course to several hundred guests included greyhounds in gem-studded velvet collars, hawks in tinkling silver bells, suits of armor, rolls of silk and brocade, garments trimmed with pearls and ermine, fully caparisoned warhorses, and twelve fat oxen. For the entry into Paris of the new Queen, Isabel of Bavaria, the entire length of the Rue St. Denis was hung with a canopy representing the firmament twinkling with stars from which sweetly singing an-

gels descended bearing a crown, and fountains ran with wine, distributed to the people in golden cups by lovely maidens wearing caps of solid gold.

One wonders where all the money came from for such luxury and festivity in a time of devastation. What taxes could burned-out and destitute people pay? This is a puzzle until one remembers that the Aga Khan got to be the richest man in the world on the backs of the poorest people, and that disaster is never as pervasive as it seems from recorded accounts. It is one of the pitfalls for historians that the very fact of being on the record makes a happening appear to have been continuous and all-inclusive, whereas in reality it is more likely to have been sporadic both in time and place. Besides, persistence of the normal is usually greater than the effect of disturbance, as we know from our own times. After absorbing the daily paper and weekly magazine, one expects to face a world consisting entirely of strikes, crimes, power shortages, broken water mains, stalled trains, school shutdowns, Black Panthers, addicts, transvestites, rapists, and militant lesbians. The fact is that one can come home in the evening—on a lucky day—without having encountered more than two or three of these phenomena. This has led me to formulate Tuchman's Law, as follows: "The fact of being reported increases the *apparent* extent of a deplorable development by a factor of ten." (I snatch the figure from the air and will leave it to the quantifiers to justify.)

The astonishing fact is that except for Boccaccio, to whom we owe the most vivid account, the Black Death was virtually ignored by the great writers of

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the time. Petrarch, who was forty-four when it happened, mentions it only as the occasion for the death of Laura; Chaucer, from what I have read, passes it over in silence; Jean Froissart, the Herodotus of his time, gives it no more than one casual paragraph, and even that second Isaiah, the author of *Piers Plowman,* who might have been expected to make it central to his theme of woe, uses it only incidentally. One could argue that in 1348 Chaucer was only eight or nine years old and Froissart ten or eleven and the unknown Langland probably of the same vintage, but that is old enough to absorb and remember a great catastrophe, especially when they lived through several returns of the plague as grown men.

Perhaps this tells us that disaster, once survived, leaves less track than one supposed, or that man's instinct for living pushes it down below the surface, or simply that his recuperative powers are remarkable. Or was it just an accident of personality? Is it significant or just chance that Chaucer, the greatest writer of his age, was so uncharacteristic of it in sanguine temperament and good-humored view of his fellow creatures?

As for Froissart, never was a man more in love with his age. To him it appeared as a marvelous pageant of glittering armor and the beauty of emblazoned banners fluttering in the breeze and the clear shrill call of the trumpet. Still believing, still enraptured by the chivalric ideal, he reports savagery, treachery, limitless greed, and the pitiless slaughter of the poor when driven to revolt as minor stumbles in the grand adventure of valor and honor. Yet near the end, even Froissart could not hide from himself the decay made plain by a dissolute court, venality in high places, and a knighthood that kept losing battles. In 1397, the year he turned sixty, the defeat and massacre of the flower of chivalry at the hands of the Turks in the battle of Nicopolis set the seal on the incompetence of his heroes. Lastly, the murder of a King in England shocked him deeply, not for any love of Richard II but because the act was subversive of the whole order that sustained his world. As in Watergate, the underside had rolled to the surface all too visibly. Froissart had not the heart to continue and brought his chronicle to an end.

The sad century closed with a meeting between King Charles VI of France and the Emperor Wenceslaus, the one intermittently mad and the other regularly drunk. They met at Reims in 1397 to consult on means of ending the papal schism, but whenever Charles had a lucid interval, Wenceslaus was in a stupor and so the conference, proving fruitless, was called off.

It makes an artistic ending. Yet in that same year Johann Gutenberg, who was to change the world, was born. In the next century appeared Joan of Arc, embodying the new spirit of nationalism, still pure like mountain water before it runs downhill; and Columbus, who opened a new hemisphere; and Copernicus, who revolutionized the concept of the earth's relation to the universe; and Michelangelo, whose sculptured visions gave man a new status; in those proud, superb, unconquered figures, the human being, not God, was captain.

As our century enters its final quarter, I am not persuaded, despite the signs, that the end is necessarily doom. The doomsayers work by extrapolation; they take a trend and extend it, forgetting that the doom factor sooner or later generates a coping mechanism. I have a rule for this situation too, which is absolute: you cannot extrapolate any series in which the human element intrudes; history, that is, the human narrative, never follows, and will always fool, the scientific curve. I cannot tell you what twists it will take, but I expect, that like our ancestors, we, too, will muddle through. □

REST

Lay your dear head upon
This heart of clay,
We are but dust, now here, now gone,
All things are hastening away—
Here, in this heart of clay,
Love still lives on.
There lay your head.

by John Hall Wheelock

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HOW NOW WORLD'S GREATEST COW?

by Paul O'Neil

Meet Skagvale Graceful Hattie, internationally known as a "hard worker." If she weren't, she'd have been hamburger long ago.

If you've wondered why cowbells and milk cans have been relegated to roadside antique stores—or think lowing kine still wend their homeward way from distant leas—you don't know much about that carton of Light n' Lively you keep next to the "half and half" in your refrigerator. Milk is now a factory product. The cows which manufacture it are parked, increasingly, in paved lots, are monitored by computers, fed by automated devices, and—thanks to artificial insemination—are remodeled, generation by generation, to increase their yield and their fitness for work on the assembly line. Meet Skagvale Graceful Hattie, the most productive dairy cow of all time. Hattie not only broke a twenty-one-year-old world record by giving 44,019 pounds (or 20,047 quarts) of milk last year, but revealed herself as the very epitome of that genetic tinkering by which the bovine sisterhood is presently being merged with U.S. industry.

Not that so rare a creature is, herself, required to toil under factory conditions; Hattie's owners, the Tenneson brothers of Sedro Woolley, Washington, provide her with an aluminum-sided barn of her own, another high-toned Holstein named Craigo Petro Telstar as a kind of lady-in-waiting, heaps of fresh wood shavings upon which to rest and sleep, and constant access to a small, individual pasture which looks out upon the green Skagit Valley and the looming, fir-clad foothills of the Cascade Mountains. One is hard put not to feel a certain awe on meeting her face to face. All Holsteins are large but Hattie—a big-boned, broad-faced, black beast with four white stockings and a white-splashed rump—is ponderous. She stands five feet one at the shoulders and weighs (when with calf) one ton. Hattie (listed as No. 6069325 in the computerized Holstein-Friesian herd "book" at Brattleboro, Vermont) is docile, even, one might say, resigned. One nevertheless detects, when fixed at close range by her cold blue-black Holstein eye, a gloomy Hapsburgian queenliness of mien. One would not like Hattie to step on one's foot.

One's gingerly fascination increases while watching her at work. Hattie is now ten years old and her udder is no longer chic. She looks, in fact—to indulge in well-worn dairy humor—"as though you'd have to jack her up to put a milking machine on her." She is still making history for all that—more than tripling the average U.S. cow's yield for a third year in a row. Hattie is "an eating fool," as, indeed, she must be, since a cow's production, like that of other industrial machines, is directly tied to the tonnage of raw material she in-

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gests. Most dairy animals spend eight hours of the twenty-four resting (with perhaps four hours of sleep), eight eating, and eight chewing their cud (although not, naturally, in consecutive eight-hour stretches). But Hattie sends so much cellulose fiber down to her four stomachs (she consumes more than sixty pounds of alfalfa hay and up to forty-five pounds of grain every twenty-four hours) that to get the job of rumination done she has to keep regurgitating and chewing away even when lying down.

Hattie's own, personal De Laval milking machine is affixed to her at precise twelve-hour intervals (6:30 A.M. and 6:30 P.M.) and it puffs and clicks away for a full eight minutes (double average milking time) in extracting her flood of fluid product. Hattie's front end completely ignores her rear end during the rites of lactation. Front end starts chewing stolidly on twenty pounds of grain even as a dairy hand steps forward in a waist-deep pit beside her stall, squirts her udder with a spray of warm water, and mops it with a sponge; she goes on chewing, pausing only occasionally to blow and stare, as the machine's four vacuum cups suck in her teats and start jiggling away back there under her belly. When the cups are removed and the compressed-air gate of her stall hisses open, Hattie lurches obediently into the opening, lumbers outside, goes back to her feed rack, and starts grinding down more hay. Hattie is internationally known as a "hard worker."

It is a trait she shares, in varying degree, with the rest of the bovine sisterhood. Today's cow is dedicated to the job—or else! But the average dairy animal lives far differently than Hattie for all that. Grazing—though it still goes on—is a vanishing practice. More and more cows are kept in paved corrals which can be cleaned by a tractor blade, are nourished at bordering feed racks which can be filled by a mobile hay and silage dispenser, and are sheltered in adjacent open sheds equipped with rubber mats for resting and sometimes with slotted floors to conduct waste into an underground flushing system. They are paraded to a central "milking parlor" every twelve hours to take part in what might be described as community lactation: to be connected in groups (by way of multiple milking machines) to a maze of sterile, vacuum-actuated, stainless steel plumbing and thence to one of the refrigerated storage tanks which every dairyman must install for a Grade A rating.

The cow is not only expected to manufacture her owner's basic product but to assist—on being angle-parked for milking in a row of four, six, eight, or ten other beasts—in making the assembly line concept work. This is particularly true at those enormous dairies-of-the-future which have sprung up in Southern California, Arizona, and Florida—establishments which employ a thousand, even two thousand, cows and keep their milking parlors operating day and night. Members of any herd, luckily, establish their own social order (with mean "boss cows" seizing power and with meeker sisters accepting positions of descending status) and tend to line up in predictable groups every day. Not all of them, however—though most accept mechanization with equanimity—qualify for life in the factory.

A cow cannot properly produce, for instance, unless her udder is first "stimulated" for sixty seconds or so—as by a nuzzling calf or the preliminaries of old-fashioned hand-milking. This priming process sends a nerve message to the anterior lobe of her pituitary gland and charges her bloodstream with a chemical called oxytocin which acts, in turn, on her milk-producing cells and relaxes the sphincter muscles of her teats. California dairies achieve this effect by herding their animals, fifty at a time, into pre-milking holding rooms and hitting their undersides with spray from batteries of floor sprinklers; at many other dairies, however, cows must learn to enter "prep stalls" on their way to the parlor and to stand there while their udders are automatically squirted with streams of (1) a detergent solution, and (2) warm water.

The cow who is too nervous, excitable, shy, or contrary to enter unhesitatingly into such a routine gets a quick trip to the slaughterhouse. So does the cow (unless she is an exceptional producer) who cannot be completely milked in four or five minutes. Such a nonconformist ties up the milking parlor after her group has vacated it and, since the animals in line behind her will not stay stimulated for more than nine minutes, may stop the whole production line with her lack of glandular promptness. But factory cows do not live long, anyhow. All are converted to hamburger as soon as their milk production begins to fall off—usually by the time they are six years old—thus allowing them, with 2.5 million industrially useless young dairy bulls, to contribute 18 percent of all the beef we eat each year.

This insistence on high productivity is an old American farm tradition. Black and white Holstein-Friesians like Hattie were imported from the Netherlands in the first place because they gave more milk than Jerseys, Brown Swiss, Guernseys, and Ayrshires, and U.S. dairymen have spent a hundred years—during which the breed has come to comprise 85 percent of the national dairy herd—in making improvements on the European original. But there has been nothing in history to match the enhancement, during the last twenty years, of the American Holstein's capacity for making milk—a phenomenon which has sprung from new techniques of artificial insemination, from the advent of computers, and from methods of herd manage-

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ment inherent in the factory system. It took 27 million cows to satisfy the country's need for milk in 1947; it takes only 12.2 million of the new models to do the job today.

Enter that frightening monster, the Holstein bull—a beast who would make *el toro* of the Spanish *corrida* look like a watchdog. Holstein cows are big, but their pedigreed brothers are enormous; they stand five feet seven inches, are eight feet long, have heads like small beer kegs, and weigh up to two tons. A bull who has been admitted to membership in one of twenty-nine very exclusive U.S. studs (Washington State's immaculately housed All West Breeders, for example, or Wisconsin's air-conditioned American Breeders Service) is assured of a very active sex life—he is expected to perform three times a day on an average of two days a week. He never, however, meets a cow. He contributes to the greater glory of the breed by means which he might very well find discouraging if he knew any better—or if there were any other game in town.

The operators of stud services use a steer—since bulls must mount another animal to achieve sexual climax—as a kind of reusable target for him and his snorting fellow aristocrats. As the bull is maneuvered out of his heavily barred stall by chains attached to his nose ring, and as the steer's neck is locked into a stanchion to prevent any unseemly skittishness, a cool and agile man steps forward bearing a strange device—a fifteen-inch length of tractor radiator hose which is lined with soft rubber and terminates with a graduated test tube. When bull leaps on quarry this acolyte darts in like a picador, guides the monster's penis into the "artificial vagina" and—having waited long enough but no longer—gets the hell out of range and takes his test tube into an adjoining laboratory where technicians "extend" its contents by mixing them with homogenized milk or a solution of powdered egg yolk and distilled water.

This process has made the Holstein bull the most prodigious, ubiquitous, and influential sire of offspring in the history of the world. He produces from 350 to 450 small glass ampules of extended semen—each capable of fertilizing a cow—every time he is "worked," and the contents of these little flagons, on being tinctured with antibiotics and plunged into liquid nitrogen, can be frozen and preserved until kingdom come. Breeders deliver frozen ampules directly to the U.S. barnyard (or anywhere else in the world) and furnish their recipients with individual liquid nitrogen containers in which to store them. Rare old semen, like Lafite Rothschild 1947, sometimes engenders speculation: a half interest in two ampules from one great sire brought $10,000, according to rumor, after they were discovered in Canada several years after his death. But bargain prices are the rule. The American herd's performance has zoomed because farmers can breed their lowliest dams to the greatest bulls for from $2.50 to $25.

This makes life precarious for the Holstein male. Hardly more than 1000 bulls are needed to keep the country's 12 million cows with calf; a popular sire will produce 50,000 offspring a year through artificial insemination and as many as a million of them in a career. A contender for studhood needs more than impeccable bloodlines, moreover, if he is to succeed. He is a creature of matriarchy, is no good if he cannot transmit and augment female characteristics, and usually ends up, no matter how promising his background, in somebody's beef stew. He becomes a pasha of his kind, of course, if he proves worthy (genetic talent, luckily for the losers, cannot be assayed until a bull's first crop of daughters has grown up, calved, and begun to give milk). Horsemen speak no more reverently of Man o' War or Citation than do dairymen of bulls like ABC Reflection Sovereign, Osborndale Ivanhoe, King Segis, or Johanna Rag Apple Pabst. Such an animal may well make his owner rich and he will be kept alive until his last wheeze.

But bulls are only instruments—albeit instruments of enormous value—with which the great American cow is being remodeled; the cryogenically packaged ampules they provide are being used with increasing sophistication—thanks, in no small part, to computers operated by the Holstein-Friesian Association of America (which monitors the lives and times of 1.5 million pedigreed dairy animals) and by a federally inspired National Herd Improvement Program. Member farmers get regular printouts which not only report every cow's monthly production, and the pounds of daily grain she has earned by her performance, but nominate bulls capable (in a specific, high percentage of cases) of making her calf a better cow than she is. Such computer dating does more than increase lactic output—it is presently strengthening the big ligaments which support the Holstein's udder, widening the bony structure of her hind quarters and providing her with perpendicular teats (spaced no more than eight inches, fore and aft) which augment the vacuum system of milking machines.

Improved model or not, a newborn calf is taken from its mother after just one feeding of post-birth colostrum milk—a fluid which is loaded with disease-inhibiting antibodies. Mama is at the height of production during the two months after delivery and is hurried back to the milking machines forthwith. Her offspring may well begin life (labor costs being what they are) in an automated nursery such as is operated by Seattle-Tacoma's huge Smith Brothers Dairy. Humans seldom enter this big, air-conditioned building: it has slotted floors and hydraulic underground waste disposal, and its double rows of penned calves feed from mechanical moth-

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ers with overhead trolleys—mobile electric tank carts which trundle endlessly up and down its long aisles, stopping themselves for three minutes at each little stall while the occupant drinks warm milk from a rubber nipple on the end of a pipe. The dairyman—like the baseball manager—depends on a farm system as well (one based, in this case, on real farms). Cows-to-be are hustled off, once weaned, to establishments which make a business of raising heifers until their unseemly adolescent cavorting is done and they are old enough to begin their lifework.

An all-time bovine superstar like Skagvale Graceful Hattie stands, chewing away at her cud, at the very epicenter of this system—the future of the whole American dairy herd and many concepts implicit in milk factories themselves are based in the genes of such big producers as she. Her relationship to the rest of the sisterhood is almost exactly that of the winning Indianapolis racing car to the country's herds of family sedans, and men like the Tenneson brothers, who breed high-performance animals, share many of the tensions, hopes, disappointments, and moments of excitement of those who design high-performance automobiles. A beast like Hattie *is*, in one sense, designed ahead of time by those who breed cattle—although such planning, as with Kentucky Derby candidates as well as Grand Prix cars, is notable for frustration and failure.

It takes time (measured in decades) and money (measured in six figures) to succeed, in most circumstances, in the tricky and expensive business of producing championship dairy animals. Hattie's background, measured on these scales, is as astonishing as her performance. The Tenneson brothers, John, thirty-seven, Glen, thirty-six, and Dale, thirty-one, needed only ten years to create her—starting in 1953 with nothing but a mortgage on the family farm—and have taken only ten more to establish an international reputation as breeders of an unusual Holstein line. They have done so, moreover—in a day of increasingly scientific methods—by native shrewdness, a stubborn faith in inbreeding, and a kind of catch-as-catch-can instinct for discerning greatness in animals others disregard.

Neither John—moving spirit and leader of the clan—nor Glen could afford a college education and they credit most of their knowledge of animal husbandry to a Four-H Club they joined while attending a rural high school. But both men—and particularly John, a boy who hung around cattle breeders in his teens as hot rodders of his generation hung around garages—seemed to know in their bones exactly how to play their complex game. "We were so broke," says John, "that we couldn't even afford a secondhand car. But my father (a Norwegian farmer who eventually worked himself into the grave clearing and tilling the family acres) agreed to let us mortgage the place to buy some breeding stock." They got a crippled bull named Puget Sound Prince for $500—betting that bloodlines in his background would offset the influence of an "ordinary" dam. They got a high-class heifer named Puget Sound Netherland Grace for less when her owners concluded, after repeated failure, that she could not be gotten with calf. The pair produced a bull named Skagvale Charming Dynamic, which—bred to a tremendous, though aging, producer (also named Hattie)—fathered Hattie herself, the nonpareil.

Neither Tenneson realized what they had wrought: John almost sold her when she was first with calf and was rescued only because the buyer, a Michigan farmer, cried, "That swaybacked old horse? I wouldn't have her on the place!" ("She isn't easy on top at all," says John, pointing to her level back. But, with gratitude: "The weight of the calf did make her look that way.") Hattie astonished them when she began milking in January, 1965; she gave seventy pounds a day, a tremendous performance for a young animal. She kept on surprising them. Most cows produce 60 percent of their milk with the rear quarters of their udders and only 40 percent in front. Hattie did as well in front as in back. The production of most cows decreases dramatically after a few months. But Hattie increased her output to eighty-five pounds when put on grass in the spring, and though it diminished slowly thereafter, she demonstrated an astonishing capacity for high production in months when most animals are beginning to go dry.

This reluctance to quit "work" (it takes thirteen months, rather than the usual ten, to get her shut off for a rest before calving) is the trait by which Hattie eventually proved herself the greatest cow in the history of the world. It was augmented, however, by sheer physical strength—what the Tennesons call her "power." She needed it. The previous record holder, Green Meadow Lily Pabst of Elsie, Michigan (who gave 42,905 pounds over 365 days in 1951), was milked three times every twenty-four hours—a practice which increases production by as much as 15 percent. The Tennesons decided to milk Hattie but twice—since it was their stubborn (and audacious) contention that a working animal should be tested under working conditions.

Hattie—and her stomachs—did not let them down. When her output began diminishing they decided, somewhat like automotive engineers trying richer fuels, to increase her intake of grain. She not only ate it but converted it, pound by extra pound, into extra milk. She had to cope with summer heat unusual to the Northwest. Heat bothers Holsteins far more than cold and the strain made her falter in her nonstop eating. "You could tell,"

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says John, "that she was having to work awfully hard at it." But the Tennesons, when she took to lying down in the barn, played batteries of electric fans on her, and for every decline she staged a rally. The weather improved and Hattie drove industriously for the finish line, matched the record with more than two weeks to spare, and went on to exceed it by an impressive margin.

Hattie's career is not done yet, although it almost ended at 4:30 one morning last summer when she somehow punctured one of the milk veins which supply her udder—blood vessels, in her case, almost as big as the fuel lines of a jet engine. John Tenneson, who was up and about at that early hour by sheer coincidence, found her standing at the feed rack with blood pouring from her belly in a steady stream. "She didn't seem to know the difference," he says. "She went right on eating. But she would have been dead in twenty minutes." He pressed one hand to the wound, like the Dutch boy of folklore plugging the imperiled dike, until his brothers summoned a veterinarian. The vet wound a huge bandage around her body, the brothers hired high school girls as round-the-clock cow sitters, and Hattie—who endured the lot of them with her usual lugubrious docility—was soon as good as new.

There is no breeder of dairy cattle, anywhere in the world, who is not now aware of the new superstar; it is the American Holstein, rather than the Dutch original, which the Japanese, the Yugoslavs, the Israelis (who boast the world's highest average production), and even Holland's European neighbors now seek in upgrading their herds. The grandest hay eater's children will henceforth be coveted—and priced—as were jewels from the foreheads of Indian idols. As long, at any rate—and this is one of the frustrations peculiar to the cattle breeder—as she goes on having them. The quest for fame has taken ten years. Hattie, ironically, will be an old lady soon, and nature will impose its inexorable limitations upon her after a few more pregnancies. But, then again, maybe not. Science is laboring away—in this case only a few miles beyond the barn—with a fiendishly ingenious scheme for making a cow like Hattie produce offspring like a rabbit.

"Embryo transfer"—the means at issue—involves (1) injecting a cow with a "follicle stimulating hormone" (a serum, for instance, from pregnant mares) which causes her reproductive system to release five, six, or even as many as a dozen ova instead of a single egg; (2) inseminating her artificially; (3) removing the resultant embryos by surgery; and (4) implanting each in an ordinary cow, which then assumes the task of bringing it to term and delivering it to the expectant world of cattle buyers. The process dates, as a theory, to the early 1900s and was used to produce calves more than twenty years ago. The natural mother, unfortunately, always died. But scientific entrepreneurs—working independently in Calgary and Rubottom, Oklahoma—have recently perfected new, nonfatal transfer systems for beef cattle, and a pair of Northwest veterinarians (backed, among others, by the Tennesons) are presently attempting to apply the concept to dairy animals. Patient Hattie, should they eventually succeed, might assume a whole new function in her declining years, and—having had her innards harvested on repeated demand—leave "multiple lifetime numbers" of expensive children when departing at last, full of honors (and a certain amount of scar tissue) for the "big feed rack in the sky." □

THE POLITE MUGGER

let me relieve you
of your purse my dear
your vegetables are in the snow
your French bread is making a crude
gesture in the gutter and your
lettuce is sticking its green tongue
out from under its
plastic poncho my dear let me
relieve you of your purse your
right knee has slipped under
my left elbow and the street
is deserted forgive me but your
mayonnaise yes yes you must have been
planning a party the steak the steak
is being hauled off by a small dog
and your blond hair is tangled
with cashew nuts and Camembert
and there remain only your vegetables
in the snow and the inconvenience of your
eyes wide as mouths at the dentist's
forgive me you don't mind
if I just you
don't mind
if I

by Anne Hussey

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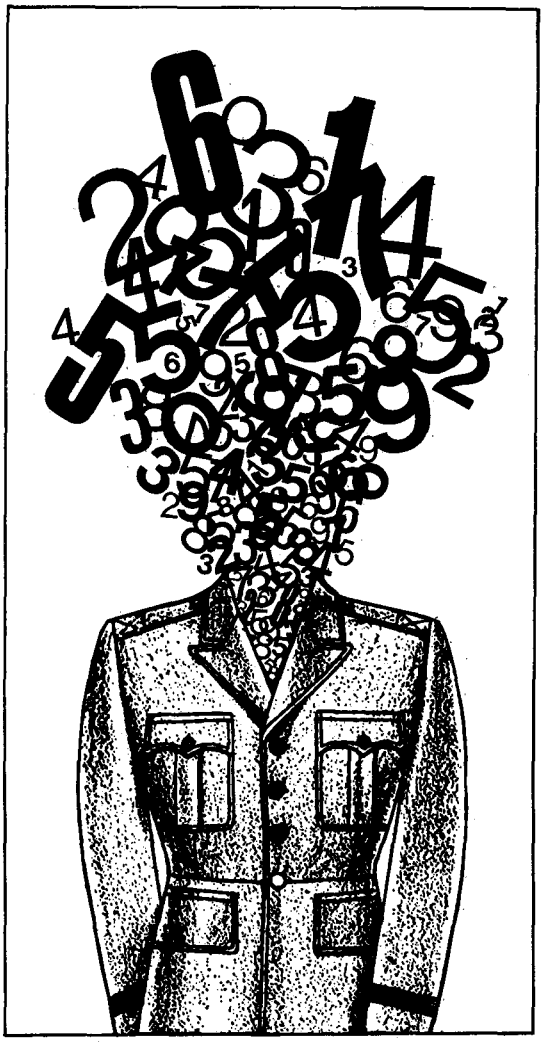
THE ENDLESS NIGHT



by Stephen Becker

When a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, neither shall he be charged with any business; but he shall be free at home one year, and shall cheer up his wife which he hath taken. Benny was granted that much. In September of 1950, when Joseph was four months old and Carol had someone else to love, the government of the United States, which had paid for much of Dr. Benny Beer's medical education, sent him the bill. He was impressed into service—an emergency, they assured him—and was sent to Korea, where a war had been agreed upon.

The bronchial truck ran a fever and died, Beer's luck, with a clank and a rattle and a last obscene poop. Swede let her run down the hill, there was a building, shelter and maybe water. Closer we saw how big it was, how solid, and I worried about the enemy. By now no one knew for sure who the enemy was. Ewald steered our dead dinosaur into a courtyard; we tumbled out and inspected the building, an inn it was or a roadhouse, disused and silent, cavernous. Outside again we poked at the radio with cold fingers. I felt like a damn fool saying "Blue two, Beer on."

Blue two did not know who Beer was.

"Your doctor," I said. "Your friendly neighborhood gynecologist. I need another truck."

Blue two complained. *He* complained. So I apologized. Blue two meditated that. Blue two asked where I was, and I gave coordinates. I heard no gunfire. I described the building.

Blue two said that all of them might be falling back, and perhaps I should set up where I was. That was agreeable. "There's another doctor on the way," I told him. "On the main drag there. Noonan. Send him here if you fall back. Also transport. Trucks, for the wounded. Could they cut us off to the south?"

Blue two said, "Yes." Blue two went on at length, as if it was important to explain this defeat to Lieutenant Beer. I truly expected to live only a short while, and was bored by these details.

"Blue two out," Blue two said finally.

"Bye bye," I said.

"How bad is it?" Ewald wanted to know.

"Very bad. Even the good parts are bad. Lots of Chinese, they think. Anyway, this is home. Let's unload."

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"Home," Ewald repeated, and moved to the tailgate. Ewald was short, fat, yellow-haired, a buttery boy of twenty-one, and it is my fault as much as any man's that he is dead. I remembered being twenty-one and wanting desperately to be twenty-two. Now I was twenty-six and wanted desperately to be twenty-two. The afternoon air was crisp and still; no aircraft streaked the opal silence, no gunfire. I looked about me, great distances, far across the barren mountains. I saw patches of snow. I stared to the north, suddenly breathless, alien. I was fifty miles from Manchuria.

"Quiet out there," Ewald said.

"That plane scared hell out of me."

"It was ours anyway."

"They're all ours."

"Not all," Ewald said. "We knocked one of theirs down a while ago. Jet against jet. First time in history. It was on the bulletin board."

"Another milestone for the human race. I wish I knew what it was all about. I get the feeling we're not even in Korea. Chile, or Siberia. And we sit here with a dandy little clinic, and a dead truck, and several dollars' worth of equipment, snake oil and rectal sandpaper and such, and the goddamn phone doesn't even ring." I must have smiled about then, sourly. "Like every doctor's first year."

"You missed the worst," Ewald said. "They shot prisoners."

"We will too."

"I don't believe that."

"Believe it." I felt harsh, remote, old. The first surprise in that war: everybody was so young. "I've seen red-blooded American boys shoot down German prisoners, white men, blue eyes, blond hair. Gooks are nothing. Cockroaches."

"They started it," Ewald said sullenly.

"Right," I said.

The radiophone crackled. "Beer on."

"We're falling back all right," Blue two said. "Noonan's dead. Mortars."

"We're ready," I said.

A jeep skidded into the courtyard, the driver shouting, and Ewald was there with a stretcher and an unconscious soldier was on the table in seconds and I was cutting his uniform away. It was a single shot in the abdomen. "Aaach," I said, knowing, and felt the faint, fluttery pulse, washed the belly with one quick motion, a little excited now, a real patient, echoes and memories of a hundred classrooms and clinics, but the man was dead before the dressing touched him.

The driver pushed in with another case, this one walking, or stumbling, bandages caked brown on an arm that had to come off. They toted the corpse into a corner and shot number two full of morphine and I went to work; trimmed the wound, pumped a little plasma into him. Ewald tagged him, and he was ready: "Take him," I said. "Where?" the driver asked, another boy—God Almighty, how young they were! "Anju," I said. "Just run south. Take that body too."

"Body." The boy shook his head.

"You've got room. We haven't. Or leave him for the crows," and there was hubbub outside, and Ewald ran to the door. "Jesus," he said. There was plenty of noise now, jets, and farther off crumps and rattles. "Jesus," Ewald said. I was afraid, cold, but again there was no time. Men staggered in; men were carried in. "Christ, he's all gray." A raw red hole in him, hipbone to kidney, blood vessels; more plasma, while I swabbed and packed. "Transport. What've we got out there?" "Two trucks." "Plenty of room." "For now." "Any officers?" "Not conscious." "Call home," I said. "Tell them we're busy and need wheels. Or choppers. Tag this man."

No minor ailments today. Chest. Good Christ, what can I do about a chest? I staunched, cleaned, packed, a mechanic. My God, I'm all alone. Ewald with the syrette. Oh Christ, the femoral artery too. Hunter's canal wide open. Barges, tugboats. My gloves slipped through blood, tripped and groped through small masses of jelly. "He's dead," Ewald said. "God, yes," I said. Men lugged it away. It was replaced. "Good," I said. "Broken femur." "He's conscious." "Knock him out." "They'll send trucks," Ewald said. "A bunch coming down. Choppers if they can. The mobile hospitals are on the run too, so we're just about number one."

"Call back," I said. "Tell them we're it and we need everything. Doctors, medics, plasma, dressings, the works. Lamps, even. All right, that splint now. Keep these men warm." No one listened; no matter. I worked, I muttered; iron-headed generals killing their own men, too good to think about a retreat. Chinese won't dare! There. You're all right, mister. You'll live to fight again. Move him. Next.

By nightfall my arms were weary. I worked. I made and lost acquaintances. Sergeants assumed responsibilities and shortly moved out, omitting farewells and leaving confusion behind. With darkness the firing diminished. Trade remained brisk. I had not understood how truly random nature could be. Bullets flew about like atoms and hit anybody anywhere. I had idiotically imagined a war in which soldiers were politely shot

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Stephen Becker is the author of seven novels *(A Covenant with Death* and *When the War Is Over)* and several translations *(The Last of the Just).* "The Endless Night" is a condensed portion of his forthcoming novel, *Dog Tags.*

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in the shoulder or the fleshy part of the leg. Or cleanly, painlessly, expired from a single clean and painless wound won in a noble action. The triumph of myth over experience.

At dawn, I stumbled outside. The courtyard was full. Men slept in pairs like lovers, un-American, treason, hugging and groaning, livid in the pearly light, powdered white by snow. Motors droned and thumped. I counted eight trucks, two jeeps. Snow fell in sparse, minute flakes; to the east the sky was clearer. I breathed. I trudged into the brush and relieved myself, stiff, tired; yes, made Korea my own. My breath steamed and my head was leaden. I buttoned up, found a match, smoked. I walked on back. "How you doing, Swede?"

Ewald nodded. "I slept a little. This is bad, isn't it."

"Bad as can be. Any word from anybody about anything?"

"Big retreat. Anju and maybe farther. In the east too, right down to the ocean."

"We're in trouble."

"They're still coming in," Ewald said.

"As long as they come, we stay."

All day long they trickled in. Then it was dark again, and brutish silence, like a cheap saloon at dawn; along one wall, six patients in a row, one whimpering, others asleep, unconscious, one smoking in the half-light. In the courtyard another vehicle, slamming to a stop; boots on stone, the door flung open: "Bring him in! Bring him in!"

"What are you driving?" I forced my eyes wide, stretched my mouth, went to a basin of cold water and washed my face and left the drops to dry, to make me wakeful and brave and talented.

"Little old ten-tonner."

"Load those men onto it."

"We can't—"

"You can."

Behind the man two others bore a sagging burden. "Here," I told them. "What is it?"

"Head," someone said.

"Lay him down. Load up those others and take off."

"Take off!" Murmurs, breathy exclamations. "We can't leave this man, doc. We been together a long time. This is old Jack. We'll just stick by him."

"Bullshit. Load up those men and move out."

Consultations. "No, sir. We just can't do that."

I set down my scalpel. "I guess old Jack's had it," I said cheerfully.

Scruffy, cadaverous, their leader gaped. "You mean you won't fix him up?"

"All or none. You take care of my six, I take care of Jack. It don't make me no never mind. I could use some sleep, and a smoke."

The leader turned. "Pile those men in the truck."

"With great care," I said. "Two of them can walk. The one with the bandages on his head, sit him up if you can wedge him tight and keep him wedged. The others flat on their backs. Then take off."

"We'll take off when Jack can go."

"You'll take off now," I said. "That's an order. I'll stay with Jack. That's a promise."

I set to work on Jack while the others hefted and complained and scuffed and made cold breezes. "Some small clamps, Ewald. Look at this, down the neck like a razor. Just missed the artery," I was whispering, crooning, to myself as much as to Ewald, working and explaining and keeping awake. Not speech, incantation. The room was clear. We were alone. A motor burped, roared. Ewald seemed gray and drawn. "You could have gone." "I know," he said. "Thanks," I said. "Plasma's done." Ewald coiled tubing. I nipped and tucked.

The door swung open. I paused in mid-stitch to complain about the breeze and thought at first that I was addressing a Korean, a soldier, perhaps a servant, a chauffeur come for me and Ewald; until I saw a red star, implacably hostile eyes, and the vast, round muzzle of an automatic weapon, and I understood that I was face to face with a Chinese soldier. Shock paralyzed me, not fear but simple primitive shock: across thousands of miles and thousands of years, across seas and straits, languages and scripts, epicanthic folds and circumcisions, chopsticks and forks, this Mongolian warrior menaced this Jewish doctor. "Die-foo," I said, the Mandarin for doctor. The Chinese eyes widened briefly; the man gestured and two others entered, bearing a third. Ewald was flattened against the wall beside the fireplace, face a rictus, as if he would hiss, a saffron cat among rattlers. "Ewald, come over here," I said firmly. "Stand at the table here and be a medic." I pointed to Ewald and said again, "Die-foo."

"Die-foo," the Chinese said, and a further string of syllables. I shook my head. More syllables. I shook my head again and went on stitching. "Die-foo," the Chinese said more urgently. He pointed to his fallen comrade, still slung between the two soldiers; an officer, I sensed. Ewald moved quickly to the table and stood across from me, rigid. I nodded to the Chinese. "You're next," I said, or gasped, and indicated Jack, half-stitched. The Chinese spoke curtly. I waved a hand: "Let me finish, you're next." The Chinese placed the muzzle of his automatic weapon at Jack's head and fired a short, thunderous burst. Jack's head blew open, some of it staining me but most of it spattering the wall. The Chinese shoved Jack off the table and issued orders. His men brought their patient to me. "Die-foo," the Chinese said, and urged me to work, prodding politely. I opened the patient's padded jacket. The Chinese spoke and his soldiers stepped forward to assist. Ewald's face was a mask, ele-

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mental: hate, terror; a mask for snakes, lightning, unexpected foul gods. I signed to the soldiers, roll him over a bit. One shot, maybe two, entry anterior just below the sixth rib, maybe nicked the spleen, maybe not, seems to have missed the lung, how do you know?—"Ewald. Plasma"—tore through the diaphragm, blew a big hole on the way out—"Plasma, Ewald"—exit posterior just below the eighth rib. Doctor Beer will pull this one through by the force of personality. "Ewald, we have a badly wounded man on the table."

"A badly—" Ewald's mad eyes rolled.

"Ewald. Plasma. That's an order. Move."

He leaned forward and spoke in a rush, spattering me with a fine spray of saliva. "For these sons of bitches? That shot our guys in the back of the head? I'll kill you. I'll kill you first."

"You're spitting on the patient," I said. "Now listen."

"There's some guns in the corner," he muttered quickly. "I'll drift over there and cover them. When I do, you get that burp gun." He was out there west of the Pecos.

"Plasma," I said. "We need it *now.*" I too leaned forward; as hard as I could I slapped Ewald, catching his cheek and temple. He hopped sideways and almost fell; recovering, he drew an outraged breath, glared, raised both hands like claws. The muzzle of the burp gun twitched. "You're attracting attention," I said. "Plasma. Right now."

The Chinese—officer? noncom, I guessed—nodded, expressionless yet approving, impassive yet attentive. Ewald prepared the plasma. I cleaned and trimmed. I glanced again at my supervisor and met a flat stare, the hint of a nod. I concentrated: as well that this man not die; no, he would not die this time. "Ewald," I said, "you don't like this at all. You don't understand it."

"I understand it. You're yellow."

"Yes, that would be it. Don't let this gent hear you use that word that way." My patient stirred. "Somewhere in Washington is the man who decided that I had to come to Korea. It was a mistake. Some clerk. I hadn't interned and they took no such. Only me. And we couldn't fight the goddamn machine. Now if that clerk was on the table here, I'd do exactly the same for him. Understand?"

"No. Shut up. If we get out alive—"

"If we get out alive you threatened an officer. Furthermore you permitted weapons in an aid station against my strict orders. You—"

"Me?" His fists clenched. "I had nothing to do with that. You cut that out, Lieutenant."

"Watch it. This man's coming to."

I finished stitching. How did they say "temporary" in Chinese? They'd figure it out. "OK," I said.

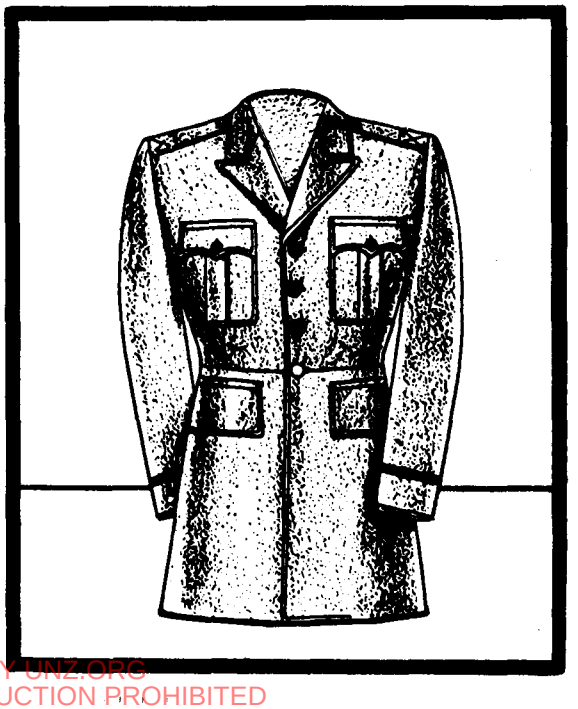
"OK," the noncom said. He spoke to his two men, who covered the patient, and then he walked about the room taking inventory. He slung his burp gun and spoke, obviously warning us not to be foolish. "Don't fool," I told Ewald.

"Someday," Ewald said, "and I hope I'm there."

"Can't please 'em all," I said.

The noncom went to the radio and to our astonishment operated it. Inconceivable; how could an American radio speak Chinese? I remembered first meeting a Negro who spoke only French: how wrong! My own uncles: the shvartzers are *Americans,* don't forget, as good as anybody! How long without sleep now—forty hours? "Hey," I said. The noncom hushed me. His call completed, he turned to me. I pointed to my pack and made eating motions. Pointed to my wristwatch and fingered a series of circles. He nodded but unslung the burp gun as I rummaged. His men were removing the American arms and some of the plasma. As I ate I wandered among the supplies, extracting what two packs might accommodate, gesturing and saying, "Die-foo, die-foo, die-foo. Ewald, wherever we wind up we'll need this stuff. Help me now and have your tantrum later." The patient moaned and stirred; I checked him and reassured the noncom.

When a vehicle pulled into the courtyard, voices rose, and the sounds of loading; four men entered, scavenged thoroughly, chatted with the noncom, removed the wounded officer. The noncom committed Ewald and his bulging pack to the care of a soldier, and walked beside me to the door. He seemed thoughtful and not inscrutable. At the door he halted me and brought the muzzle of the burp gun to my throat. I tried to read his eyes and could not, and the imminence of death ripped through me like an electric shock; my knees dissolved. The Chinese reached inside my shirt and ripped away my dog tags. I felt old aches, magic hangovers, universal *déjà vu,* everything, always.



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Outside in the dark I stumbled and sagged. I made signs for beddy-bye and they let me lie on the floor of the truck, where I was cold. I found a stack of my own blankets and wrapped myself in one and said, "Die-foo," and the Chinese all laughed.

In a searing white dawn they prodded us off the truck and into a temple. Ewald's face was yellow wax, frozen, set hard. We had no fire and now no blankets. We: a dozen or so. Ewald moved away from me and curled up on the floor. I went after him: "Stay close, Corporal. I'll need that pack." He made no answer. Men stirred. I defined myself and asked who needed help. "He does," they said, and waved at a bulky Negro.

"Unconscious or asleep?"

"Unconscious. Maybe dead."

"Give me a hand. Turn him over. Gently."

Aiee. Bad. Projectile in the back, beside the first lumbar vertebra, slashed in angling to the outside, still in there. Nerves, maybe; kidney, maybe. A mess. Little blood. The dog tags: Howard, Charles Arthur, Protestant, type O. Fever minimal. Respiration too. A lump. "Turn him back." Bladder full. I pressed lightly. Hell. I unslung the pack. Catheter, grease, needle, clamp. I drew a cc. of water into the syringe. I had to be calm and not shaky and not blasphemous and not suicidal; but a tiny black void blossomed at my precise center. I took his penis in my hand and inserted the catheter, slid it all the way up. (Taking this in? A day in the field with our boys. Penology, you might call it.) This long tube went right up into his bladder, and at the inner end was a small balloon (whee!), with a separate channel of access, and that was what the cc. of water was for: I shot it into the smaller channel and it filled the balloon which then sat in the neck of the bladder so that the catheter could not slip out. Meanwhile the poor bastard was draining into my canteen cup. Seven hundred cc.'s, I estimated. When the flow ceased I clamped the tube. Shock. He badly needed plasma. "Has he been conscious at all?" "He groans." "Watch him. If he wakes, give him all the water he can hold."

"Not supposed to give a wounded man water."

"Thanks," I said. "Make him drink." I had a considerable audience, some gagging. Always something new out of Asia. Join the Army. Enlist now. I held forth the cup: "Get rid of this." A hand took it. "Who's in charge?"

"I am." A sergeant, Southern voice. "Trezevant. First regiment, twenty-fourth." Big and black.

"Forget that. Name, rank, serial number, date of birth. If they march us we'll need a litter for this man. I want you to detail four men to carry him, two on, two off. I'll tag him. Anybody else?"

"Cuts and bruises. A smashed shoulder."

"I'll look at them. Pool the food? Share and share alike?"

"Later," the sergeant said. "Let 'em sleep."

I sat back against the stone wall of that house of worship and dozed. Later there were thirty-odd in the temple and I had performed minor embroidery. One of the newcomers was a major. "Kinsella," the major announced. "You keep these men in shape." He was a short, hard, dark-haired man, energetic, would rise early, and he reminded me of plains colleges, fields of rimed stubble, a good wing shot. He made a speech. "You take your orders from me. You refer all problems to me. You maintain discipline and respect for rank." No one cheered. He stood taut, angry. "You just do what I tell you," he said, and came to sit beside me. "We need a litter," I said. "Right," he said, and bounced up and went to the door to holler for a guard. This small tyrant; I almost smiled. Kinsella instructed, made signs; the guard stared blankly and went away. He returned with an officer and Kinsella resumed. The officer spoke English and I joined them. In a pause I spoke my one Chinese idiom and the officer grunted. "We have one man badly hurt and unconscious," I said. "If you can give me a litter we'll carry him."

Shortly two men arrived with the improvised litter. The officer followed and told us to prepare to march. "Three minutes," he said. Kinsella strode forward and made another speech. "We march in three minutes," he finished up. "Carry all you've got and stay together. Any man who drops out may be left behind."

"The hell he will," I said. "If a man drops out you'll pick him up and carry him."

Kinsella said furiously, "Lieutenant! It's my job to save as many men as possible."

"Major," I said, "it's my job to save them all."

We marched north on an open road and I drifted up and down the line. The men were tired and hungry. Now they feared our own aircraft. Some had lost blood but there was no sense of doom until the snow fell. It began in midafternoon, heavy, wet, lazy flakes, great soggy feathers of snow; in half an hour the land was white and from the rear I could not see the point. I was stiff and still ached but the walking warmed me. Trezevant trudged along beside Howard's litter. I inspected my patient every quarter hour. The man would doubtless die but there was plenty of time for that. Kinsella too moved among them, striding briskly on short legs, provoking, pleading, swearing; at the head of the column he shouted at the guards, "Rest! Rest! We need rest!" No one answered.

The litter bearers swapped off. "I wish the son of a bitch would hurry up and die." Our boys. I took Trezevant's place and wiped snow from How-

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ard. He needed nourishment. He needed a hospital and a surgeon, and radiators, and intravenous feeding. We marched. Twilight gathered, but we marched. The guards marched, iron men. Jeeplike vehicles approached, stopped, passed on. A line of four came out of the north, lights pricking through the snow, and faded to the south. Kinsella loomed out of the gray dusk. "Two men down," he bawled. "Come along." I dropped back. At the end of the column two men supported two others. "Cramp," one called. "Legs all seized up."

"Lay them down and rub."

"Guards won't let us. They stuck me once."

"Then keep going." In the wind and whirling snow our voices were soft and spooky.

"I'll send relief," Kinsella called. "Just drag 'em along. These bastards got to stop soon." To me he said, "All right, all right, we'll do all we can. Goddamn snow."

We turned to move forward together and barely glimpsed the litter at the roadside.

"Goddamn!" Kinsella yelled. "Give me a hand. I'll bust their asses for that!"

We knelt over Howard. His pulse was thin. "He's alive," I said, and then a blow in the side drove the breath out of me, whoosh, and I skidded through the snow on my face. I rolled over and spat and rose to a crouch. I stared through the gloom. A guard spat too, on me. "Die-foo!" I shouted. "Die-foo!" The guard hesitated. I stood up and took the rear of the litter; Kinsella and I hoisted, and shambled forward. "Son of a bitch *kicked* me," I panted. I started to cry. Kinsella trotted; I gulped air and kept up. We found Trezevant. "I need bearers," I told him. "The good ones. Not those other two." Men took the litter. I wiped snow from my face and breathed hard.

Kinsella and I slogged along together. Many times his hand rose, and his thumb sought the sling of a vanished carbine. Later he groaned and said, "It's no use. I got to check the rear. If they want to kill us, why don't they just shoot us?"

"Beats me. Send word if you need me."

Kinsella squinted. "You look like hell."

I tried to smile, and failed. "No sleep. Overwork. I need a doctor."

Two hours later we were herded into a dark, snowy courtyard at the center of a dark, snowy village. The men dropped in place and a vast groan arose, a common cry for peace and rest, and then there was silence except for the sobs. Kinsella called out, "Massage those men. There's still tomorrow. Move that litter out of the snow. Somewhere. Against the wall."

"Lay the blanket over him," I said.

"Where's that officer?" Kinsella stormed off.

"Trezevant," I said, "bring those two over here."

He hesitated. "We're all in bad shape."

"Bring them."

He found them and brought them to me. We could all hear Kinsella raging and sputtering. I inspected the two men. They were boys. They stood sullen and snow fell on them, gliding out of the black night into the faint light of torches. "We thought he was dead," one mumbled. I swayed but gathered myself up, stood with my feet set apart and was briefly, nastily, almost happily, a corporal again. "Take off your helmets." They stared. "Take off your helmets." Slowly they fumbled their helmets off. Snow whitened their crew cuts. They were not as big as me but I slapped them both, hard. "That's all." I felt foolish.

One of them said, "That's a court-martial."

"You remember that," I said. "Write it down."

They went off. Trezevant said, "He's going to die anyway."

"We all are. But the toughest last. I didn't do that for Howard. I did it for them."

Kinsella joined us and said, "They'll give us a kettle of hot water and that's all. No fire. There's thirty-three of us. Trezevant, the hot water's for drinking, or tea or coffee if anybody has it. Any man without food, find him some, must be a few with something in their pocket."

We made a meal that night, and slept in the snow, men embracing again; in the morning two were dead, each with a live and horrified lover. "Not frozen," I said. "Cold and exhausted."

"They'll blame it on me," Kinsella said.

"And me." I relieved myself and Howard. The march resumed, without benefit of hot water. I saw men weeping. Still it snowed. At noon we were allowed to rest at the roadside, and to eat; men strung out along the ditch and sat like cadavers. They chewed slowly, with heartbreaking effort. At six we did the same, and the food was almost gone. I dragged myself up and down the line of limp soldiers; none had strength enough to com-

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plain. My canteen was empty; I stuffed it with snow, an interminable labor. Ewald was a ghost but still bore his pack; it was lighter now, and so was mine. Howard was dying. I sat beside him and was helpless. Kinsella sat with me. There was nothing to say.

When we heard the motor and the ponderous clanking we stood up. "Off the road," Kinsella shouted, "get well off the road." We waited in darkness until a huge, squat shape shook the earth and rumbled by. "That's a Pershing," Kinsella said in outrage. "M-6," I said, "captured." "From us or from Chiang Kai-shek," Kinsella said, "or maybe bought from some Nationalist general." "That's treason," I said. Talking was no longer simple. "Treason hell," Kinsella said. "I heard there was a brisk trade. Why do we have to fight everybody's wars for them? Why can't they do anything right? They never do any goddamn fighting until they're on the other side. Then they turn into soldiers. How'd you know what it was? Were you in the last one?" "Yes, Germany," I said. "Medic?" "No. Infantry. Corporal." "I was a lieutenant," Kinsella said. "New Guinea and the Philippines." "Trezevant?" "Too young," Kinsella said. The guards were shouting and prodding. "Up and at 'em," Kinsella said. "We're going to lose a few." "Maybe," I said. I ordered two men to carry Howard and the column started off.

I had begun to feel several thousand years old and was no longer an American soldier but a Scythian captive. This column was as old as these hills, had always existed, had marched with stone axes and later with spears, through ice ages. This road had been worn flat by the feet of slaves. I had been taken by a Mongol horde, banner after banner riding league upon league over the frozen plains of Central Asia, the horizon a thousand miles off; stopping to slit a vein in their mounts' necks and drink a meal, plastering the gash with mud and riding on; their shadows cantered beside me, their bloodthirsty yip-yip-yip floated through the frigid air. Mountains, the endless bare steppe, frozen rivers to cross. I shivered. I was a prisoner in a cruel land.

I moved quickly when a man forward staggered and fell to the side. I wondered how I could have seen that in the night and the snow. Another prisoner had moved faster and was crouching over the body. I ran to help him. The crouching man looked up, spun away, disappeared into the column. The fallen man was crying out; his jacket lay open. "My ration," he cried. "He got my ration." I went breathless with anger but tugged at the man. I shouted. Kinsella was there. "Let's get him up," he said. "I can't," the man said. "You can," Kinsella said. A guard spoke sharply. We heaved the man to his feet. "Walk!" Kinsella ordered. "Just walk!" The man was sobbing but walked. The whitened column moved again.

"Some son of a bitch stole a ration from him," I said, "like that, like a cat." "You'll see more of it," Kinsella said. "Right," I said. "We'll lose some more," Kinsella said, "unless we stop soon." We were moving up the line side by side. A face swiveled, bloomed, white-eyed: "We're supposed to have trucks," the man said. "They were supposed to pull us out."

"Shut up," Kinsella said. "Keep moving."

An owl hooted through the snowy night.

Half an hour later I had understood life, the secret: glazed, frozen, and dopey, I trudged, one straight line from birth to death, from nothing to nothing, and I knew now that the first men had done it right and nobody since: thirty, forty years, kill a few mastodons, eat when hungry, sleep when tired, fuck when lusty, worship the sun and the moon, die gratefully. I did not reminisce. I shut my eyes against the relentless snow and shuffled toward my final resting place, a lonely ditch, a heap of leaves, pine needles. The snow leopards would have me and welcome.

Dimly, shouts billowed. I woke when Kinsella shook me. "Quick." The column had halted; they stood like statues, a seamy modern sculpture, a group in dead wood and white stone, heroes, a snow machine, and the world passing on to the next exhibit. I stumbled after Kinsella to the abandoned litter. Howard was well off the line of march this time, and he was dead, I knew that. We knelt. I confirmed the diagnosis. Kinsella took the dog tags. "The shoes," I said. "What else?" "Nothing," Kinsella said. "He's been stripped. No watch, no food, no butts, no nothing. His buddies." "May he rest in peace." "Amen."

We rejoined the column. "Goddamn," he said. "They ought to be flogged."

"They're dead men," I said.

"No they're not," he said fiercely, and I saw him on another day, the sun winking off gold leaves, buttons, medals, the eyes bright, white gloves, a band playing, the major at ecstatic attention, taut, flat eyes, perfect reflexes, iron cross, S.S. lightnings, steel teeth; this man like all men, born of woman, forged by the sun, tempered by the rain, polished smooth by the Army and painted by legend, blue eyes, red cheeks, gold balls, and the crowd kneeling. "They're babies," he said. "They're just not soldiers."

"They don't want to be."

"They will be," he said, "goddamn them."

They fell with bleats and groans, dropped to the earth floor, pressed to the iron stove, shivered and scrabbled in the orange half-light. "Sick and wounded to the fire!" Kinsella's parade-ground tenor shamed them all. "It's a schoolhouse," I said to Ewald. He had nothing to say but did not flee, or even glare. In a warm

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room, out of the cold, the snow, the wind, I was drowsy. I leaned against the wooden wall, and soon I slid to the floor. In the morning I said, "It wasn't a faint. I just fell asleep like a horse."

"Well, rub your eyes and think fast," Kinsella said. "They want to talk to us. We have thirty-two men now and two officers. One doctor, one medic. Name, rank, serial number, and date of birth. You men!" They fell silent; muzzily I contemplated them, scarecrows, our turn now, Americans, barbed wire and scrapping for scraps. "You men! The Chinese want to see your officers. We may not come back here. Trezevant's in charge. Maintain discipline, maintain the chain of command, take your orders from Trezevant and Trezevant will do the talking with the Chinese. Take care of each other. Keep clean. Name, rank, serial number, and date of birth. That's all. Good luck." We marched out, escorted, a cold clear morning, football, ice-skating, and then we were at attention before a Chinese officer, who nodded and led us away. Two guards marched behind us, port arms, bayonets fixed; when I turned to look, one of them growled.

We were in a village, and the villagers had turned out to see the freaks. I envied them their padded gowns, fur hats. Cloth shoes: warm? Canvas boots. Dark eyes, like mine; the faces were surely expressionless but I read reproach into them. Pain flickered through my shoulders, back, thighs; my calves twitched. Three nights and two days, and before that the aid station, aeons ago. We marched down the middle of the road, between rows of silent spectators, no fuss. I wanted to say hello, to nod, to raise a hand. At the town hall—brick, yellowed brick, electricity, a WPA post office, 1937—we were halted and searched roughly, and the crowd murmured, pleased. Kinsella bore himself stiffly and coldly. I tried to do the same but kept absorbing details: a hat of fox, another of otter; these civilians were Korean (or were they? where was I?) but all the soldiers seemed Chinese, or was it only the uniform, and how could you tell? Within the building I saw sacks, gunnysacks against the wall, and on the floor coal balls. Coal balls. I had never seen coal balls before. I was a big-city boy, and heat came from drunken janitors.

For a time there would be nothing that I could do about anything. I was standing in the lobby of a town hall in North Korea, and I was a free man for the first time in my life.

We were led to an office, and met the boss. He seemed to be Chinese, surprisingly large and bearish, a bit like me but smoother and sleeker. "Good morning," he said. "I am Ou-yang. The equivalent of your lieutenant colonel. I am a graduate of the Whangpoa military academy and have been in America in 1944. Who are you?"

"Kinsella, John Peter, Major," and he gave his number and age, "June twenty-eighth, nineteen fifteen."

The dark eyes shifted to me; I sought purchase in them, found none. I spoke the essentials and added, "I'm a doctor, a die-foo."

"You don't have to tell him that," Kinsella said.

"Don't be an ass," I said. It was disrespectful but I was a free man. To the Chinese I said, "Have you finished eating?" and quickly added, "Because we haven't. We're collapsing of hunger and cold and simple exhaustion."

Ou-yang spoke and a guard went away. "How much Chinese have you?"

"That's all," I said.

Kinsella said, "If you start this way you'll end up in his pocket."

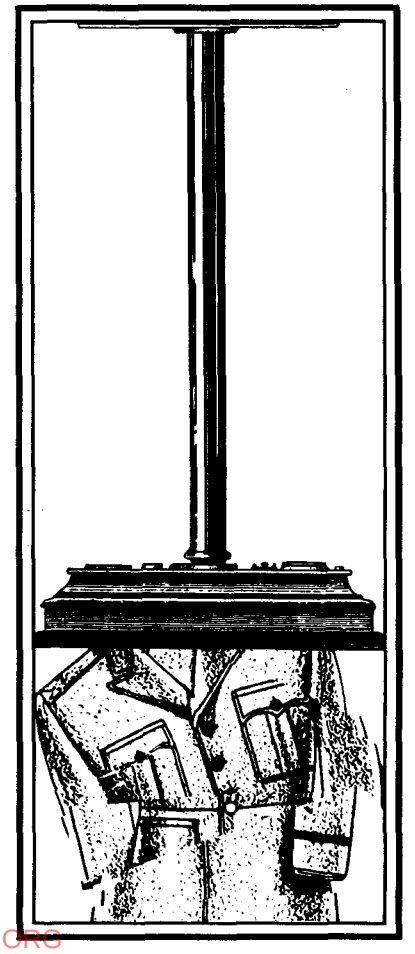
"Childish," Ou-yang said. "I have many *hundred* prisoners and no place to lodge them. And no doctors, so you will be needed."

I told him I had sick and wounded and dying, and needed antiseptics, dressings, instruments.

He stood up, and I was shocked, almost angry: he was taller than I. Big sleek head, big round shoulders. I saw him in America, grappling with words, burly and friendless, armored, a quick empty smile, a bob of the head, no girl. He said, "Yes, yes, anesthesia and penicillin, and *afterward* beef broth and ice cream and handicrafts. Use what you have."

"It's about gone."

"My own men come first."



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"The Geneva—" Kinsella began, and Ou-yang pounced; he had waited for that: "You never signed it. If you had, it would mean *nothing*. You sign anything and then kill children."

"We don't kill children," Kinsella said angrily.

"I have sick and wounded," I said.

The guard came back with a tray and Ou-yang said, "Have some boiled millet, and even tea. Tea is a *luxury* in parts of China, you never knew that; but after all, *officers*."

"We're entitled to food," Kinsella said swiftly. "It's all right, Beer."

I said, "Right."

For now we would command our own men. There would be millet and boiling water morning and night; a detail, under guard, might fetch and carry. Only the one iron stove could be spared, but there was a *superfluity* of firewood. The men would emerge on command in groups of six or less, from time to time, for exercise in place. The latrine was in the open air, altogether public; Ou-yang was wearily contemptuous of Kinsella's complaint. We must survive without further help until transfer to a permanent camp. When would that be? No one knows. Would it be in Korea or in Manchuria? No one knows. "But I imagine it will be Korea. China is not at war."

Kinsella snorted. I was dizzy and sipped hard at the tea. Ou-yang went on about their borders and their airspace and their hydroelectric power. Kinsella argued and Ou-yang silenced him. He told me I would examine his men too in emergencies. I said all right. I was gliding somewhat, side to side. "You will not," Kinsella said.

"I have no choice."

"You are not required—"

"A prior oath," I said dreamily, floating, swaying. "Just take my word for it. I have no choice."

"It's working for the enemy."

"Doctors have no enemies unless they sue," I said, and was giddy, this vaudeville, this Irishman and this Chinese and this Jew, you see, they were walking down a street in Korea and one of them says—I am still alive. I am still alive. The room whirled, and I with it, serenely, grandly, regally, and Ou-yang caught the small teacup as Kinsella caught me. Shame. A grown man. He told me I lay there smiling.

From the prisoners' compound we could see the Yalu River, gray and sluggish, jostling sullen floes westward; unnamed black birds swept low, beat lazy wings, planed into the white woods. The camp had been a village, and I wondered where the villagers were. We had been shipped north by truck, some of the trucks open and the men freezing again, hunched and huddled again, too cold for tears. We had arrived by night, so that I never knew through what gate, beneath what sign of doom or welcome, I had entered upon a new life; and we were herded into huts, again regaled with millet and boiling water. In the morning we saw that our huts were houses, homes once, thatched, mud walls, two or three rooms. After more millet and hot water I took a turn about the grounds, checking my men in three of the huts and repulsed by guards here and there until I knew my perimeter. I could see the river and dozens of huts and decided that this would be home for some time. Back in my own hut I attempted cheer. "They going to give us food?" Bewley asked. Bewley was a slim black Pfc. and a Christian.

"I hope so. Happy Valentine's Day."

Trezevant said, "No stoves, Lieutenant. But there's a crazy kind of basement, a hole in the ground and some kind of tunnel."

"I'll ask. I saw smoke."

"Yuscavage's shoulder's bleeding again."

There were eleven of us in the three rooms. Thronging the largest, we sat against dusty walls. In the dim morning light we were phantoms, the remnant of a plague. "We can't change clothes," Scafa said weakly. "No clothes." He picked at a scabby pimple. Pale: they were paper-pale.

"It's all right," I lied. "We all smell rotten. I'll see the commander today. Or somebody. It can't get worse. Now listen, you've got to take care of each other. You've got to take care of the sick ones. The rest of you have got to have work, something to do, some purpose. You understand?"

No one spoke.

"They're going to starve us," Trezevant said.

"I doubt it."

"They'll just let us die," Yuscavage said. "I got blood all over."

"No. They could have shot us. They don't give a damn about us, but we're hostages and we've got some of theirs too."

"They don't give a shit about theirs," Mulberg said. "There's millions of them. They don't care if they lose half."

"They're men and they care," I said, not sure. "And then"—the foolish things a man could say—"there's public opinion. World opinion. Propaganda. We have to hang on, live till spring. We start with today." Hit that line. "We live one day at a time. Settle in all you can, and try to keep clean. How many dysenteries?"

Three.

"You three in one room. Trezevant, detail orderlies. Two hours each healthy man, for two hours he's responsible for the sick. Feeds them and cleans them up."

"With what?"

"Rags, anything. I'll scrounge. Keep moving all you can. Walk around."

"I can't walk ten steps," Scafa said.

"Not you three."

Mulberg asked, "Where's the toilet?"

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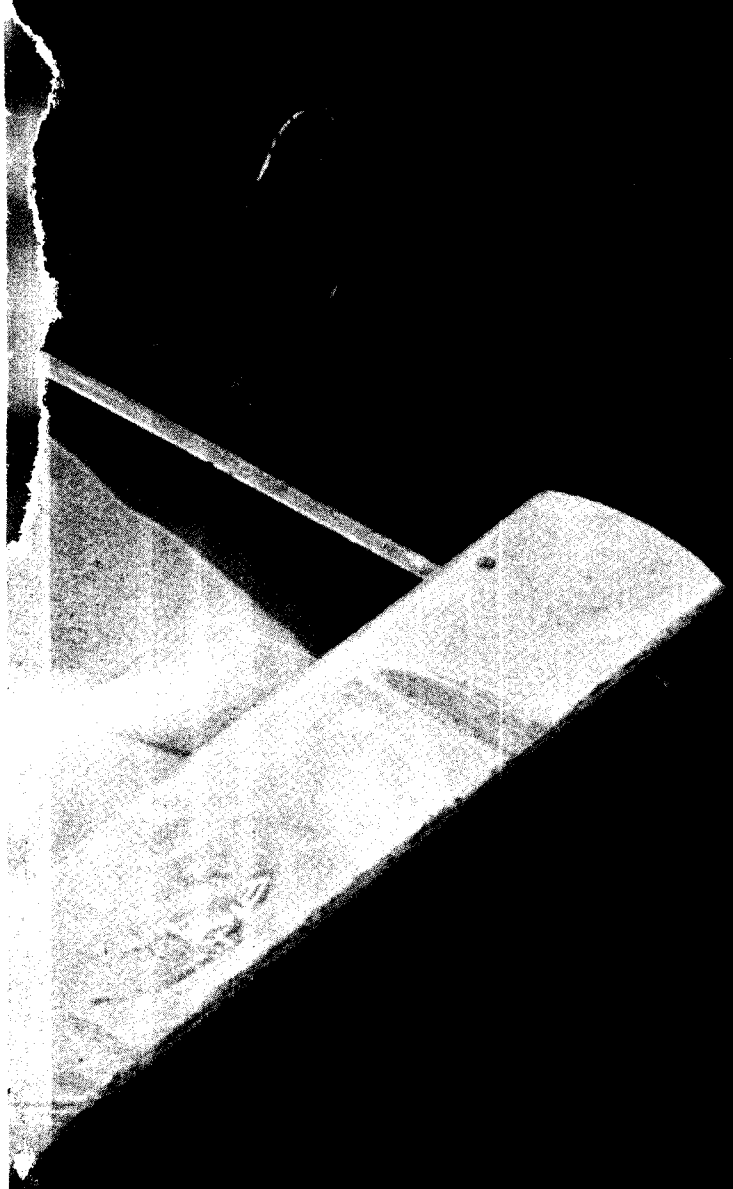
These kids are playing in a box of tomorrow's glass bottles.



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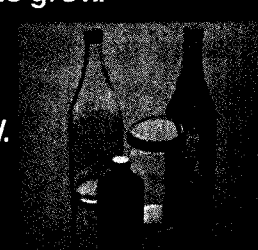

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FLY CONTINENTAL A FLIGHT TO REMEMBER

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We gaped at him. "Somewhere outside," I said. "Another thing: decide among yourselves whether you want to share and share alike. There may be a cigarette now and then, or a piece of bread."

"Bread." Collins clowned, panting like a dog. "Jesus Christ, bread."

"Try not to think about food," I said. "It won't be easy, but try not to think about it." I sought the right words, why was I not Kinsella. "This is the worst you'll ever have it. In your whole lives. Whatever you have in you, God or politics or gung ho, you need it now. You can die like pigs or live like pigs and it doesn't seem much of a choice, but it is. The one big choice and nobody can make it for you. You can starve and freeze and live up to your nose in shit and blood and pus and vomit and still make it. If it's any help, the officers are no better off."

"We're dying," Mulberg snarled. "What the hell good is officers?"

"You're not dying," I said. "And if your officers are no good, you'll know about it soon enough. For now, do as you're told. Start with a dressing for Yuscavage. He'll tell you how. I'll go make trouble, and see what happens. Settle in, now."

Scafa said, "Will we get mail?"

So I made a sortie to my perimeter, and was menaced by a guard, a rifle, a bayonet, and pronounced the magic words. "Die-foo." The guard paused. I pointed with authority to a tendril of gray smoke rising from the center of the village. "Die-foo. I want to talk to an officer." I prodded imaginary epaulets. The guard inspected me like a motorcycle cop; he grounded the weapon and cocked his head instead. He wore a quilted coat and a fur hat and canvas boots. Our steaming breath mingled. Right. All men are brothers. "Die-foo," he said. I nodded. I wondered what I looked like. Helmet, lined jacket bloody now, wool trousers also bloody, even the boots, encrustations and gobbets. Long hair, dirty beard: a goddamn guerrilla, that's what I was. I took heart. Partisan Beer. And then, a moment I would always remember, the end of the war, the end of all war, bizarre and durable mankind vanquishing the poxy fates, this guard dug into a pocket, extracted a cardboard box, drew from it one cigarette, and offered the cigarette to me. I stood paralyzed: old movies again, a trap. Nonsense. Slowly my hand rose; I accepted the cigarette, and nodded. "Hsieh-hsieh," I said, Benny of a thousand tongues, knowing "thank you" by now, the rootless cosmopolite, and the guard grinned, erupting in a long string of nonsense syllables, his eyes laughing. I smiled weakly, a forced smile but the first in some time; I felt the unaccustomed tug at socially atrophied muscles. Therapy required. I slipped the cigarette into a shirt pocket. I gestured again at the rising smoke and gabbled, making the sign for speech with my frozen fingers. White man speak with forked thumb. The guard seemed dubious, and waved me back to the hut.

Inside, I handed the cigarette to Trezevant delicately, cautiously, ceremoniously, and said, "Sergeant, distribute this."

Before noon Ou-yang came to us with a squad of armed soldiers. "Doctor Beer," he said. "I trust I find you *well.*"

"We need everything," I said. We were standing in the doorway. Trezevant a little way off; the others sprawled or came to sit against the walls; they watched like orphans. "This is inhuman."

"We too need everything." Ou-yang said harshly. "Unlike you, we are not *prepared* to make war all over the world."

I stood mute.

After an angry moment he went on. "How many are you?"

"Eleven, here."

"And how many able-bodied?"

"Seven, counting myself."

"Have four men go with these two. They will carry wood. Who is your second-in-command?"

"Sergeant Trezevant," I said, and Trez stepped forward.

"A Negro," Ou-yang said. "How do you do, Sergeant." He extended a hand.

Trezevant hesitated.

"It's all right," I said.

They shook hands. Ou-yang spoke in Chinese and then said to Trezevant, "Go with this man. He will *demonstrate* the stove."

My men murmured and sighed. "Go along," I said. "Mulberg. Collins. Bewley. Sunderman. Go with these soldiers and fetch wood. Don't fool around. Just do it."

To Ou-yang I said, "We need blankets badly and some cloth for dressings and cleaning. Warm clothes. I see wires and a socket. Is there power? Can we have a bulb?"

Ou-yang smiled, suddenly and broadly. Why? I was taken by surprise, almost by warmth. "Yes," he said. "You may have a *bulb.* You will not need blankets."

"We're not supermen," I said. "We freeze to death like anybody else."

"I must remember that," he said, and laughed. "You will not need blankets because the *heat* of the fires will circulate beneath the *floor.*"

"Thank God. We can strip the sick."

"I can give you rags. There will be a *distribution* of clothing this afternoon. There are no medicines. But in honor of your arrival there will be an extra ration tonight."

Again the men murmured and sighed. Ou-yang took them all in with an orator's glance. "We are, whatever you think, civilized people, far more so than you. We have not invaded California. We

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have no prisoners *abandoned* to their fate in camps along the Canadian border." He chuckled, jolly and pleased, and fell cold again. "You are prisoners, and not guests. We will not let you die but we will not . . . *baby* you either." Another linguist. What was this odd habit, this affectation, where had he learned it, emphasizing a word here and there, shouting it almost, as if he were transposing Chinese tones into English. At *random.* "You will fetch your own wood, every day, under guard, or every second day. You may wash clothes when there is water *left* from meals. You may dig a latrine under guard. Later on you will perhaps write *letters* and be given reading material. An officer will come later with *more* regulations. And in summer," he paused and nodded amiably, dreamily, the emperor, the Great Khan, a boon, a boon, "in summer you may *swim* in the Yalu River."

The extra ration proved to be one cup of cracked corn for each man. The black kettle squatted neutral over the fire; into the boiling water we chuted our millet, our cracked corn; Trezevant stirred, like an alchemist. The men sat sullen, cradling cups like blind beggars. Sunderman said, "How long till real chow, I wonder," and I had not the heart to tell him, but Trezevant did: "This is real chow. You eat it all, soldier. Remember there's children starving in China."

"I mean, when the kitchens get set up."

"The kitchens are all set up," Trezevant said, hulking, calm. "Shit. I grew up on meals like this." The men were warm; in places the floor was hot, and they shifted.

"Plenty of wood, anyway," I said. "We'll keep a fire watch at night."

Mulberg said, "We?"

"You," I said. For a moment, after the grainy slush, the belly was full, but soon the hunger returned, like a boy's lust, a miser's greed. In the first camp, shock had protected us; in the storm of rage, hate, guilt, and fear there had been little passion to spare for hunger. And then days of dull indifference; reprieved from death by fire, we clotted slowly into death by ice, and the spirit glimmered low; even Kinsella congealed. Then we had been moved, and it was as if the simple conquest of physical space revived us; first onto the trucks, then into the sharp wind; men complained of hunger again, and I rejoiced that they were so alive. In the hour before our arrival, and for the rest of that night, I had known hunger as a cancer, an intruder, a hostile foreign body sucking my substance; I had contracted, quivered, clenched my teeth against it; I was popeyed and brittle with hunger, and visions of sugarplums danced in my head, also brisket, Yankee bean soup, charlotte russe, fried eggs, and even beef testicles, which I had eaten only once and which were prodigiously listed as *frivolités du chef.*

Trezevant disinterred the cigarette, lit it, held it to Oldridge's lips. "A cigarette!" Sunderman said. Trezevant held it to Cuttis' lips, to Scafa's, took a drag himself, and passed it on. I opened my mouth to decline the gift, but an obscure echo of some militant uncle checked the impulse: if Trez should think it was color? I drew in smoke, passed the cigarette: "No more for me. I quit." "I don't smoke," Mulberg said, and Ewald declined with a shake of the head.

"Sons of bitches never brought clothes," Collins said.

"That corn was enough excitement for one day," I said. "Hell, we're warm."

Next day we were marched, those who could walk, to a long wooden shed where each man was issued a pair of cotton socks and a padded blue cotton uniform, and then were marched home again. A flying squad arrived shortly with an identical issue for the prostrate, though we did not dress the dysenteries. The uniforms were all the same size—38 short, I judged—single-breasted, good needlework, nothing fancy in the cut. Chinese quartermasters seemed, like all quartermasters, grudging malcontents. As in any advanced society, we were listed: name, rank, serial number, date of birth. Under guard, Kinsella visited and delivered a brief but pungent patriotic oration. He left amid silence. I wondered if our little world was improving or degenerating: we had heat now, and clothing, and what might pass for food, but in the new uniforms the men seemed more, well, uniform: more silent, passive, acquiescent, as if made brutish, almost content by the ordeal and its end. At the noonday meal they were complacent, considerate, benevolent. I too accepted: perhaps now I would not die! I thought of Carol, and of my father, Jacob, and was too empty for tears.

"Ou-yang," I said to the guard, and was escorted to Ou-yang. I was offered a chair and a cup of tea. I accepted a cigarette. I had decided that I would decline nothing. Mark that down. I stuck the cigarette behind my ear and was startled by the soundless echo of a Frenchman who had once taken two from me: *"pour mon frère qui n'a pas de travail."* "How many doctors have you?"

"One," Ou-yang said. "Pee-joe. Do you know that word?"

I shook my head.

"Pee-joe," Ou-yang said. "It means *beer* in Chinese."

"Die-foo pee-joe," I said.

"No. Pee-joe die-foo. Name first, title second. We Chinese, you know. Backward. *Upside* down. Look here." He opened a desk drawer, rummaged, unfolded a map. "The world." He passed it to me, and I examined it with a bewildering sense of error and dislocation: a huge central landmass,

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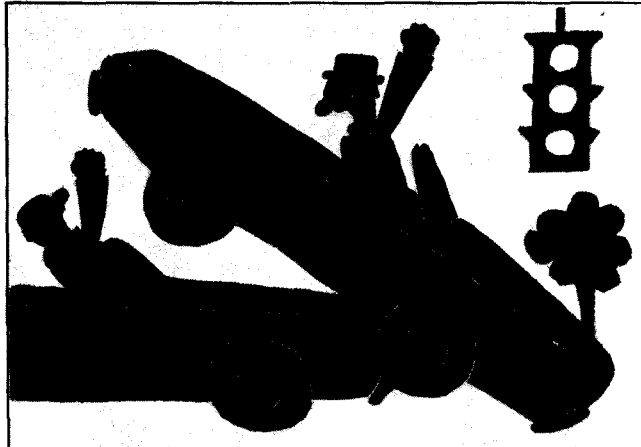

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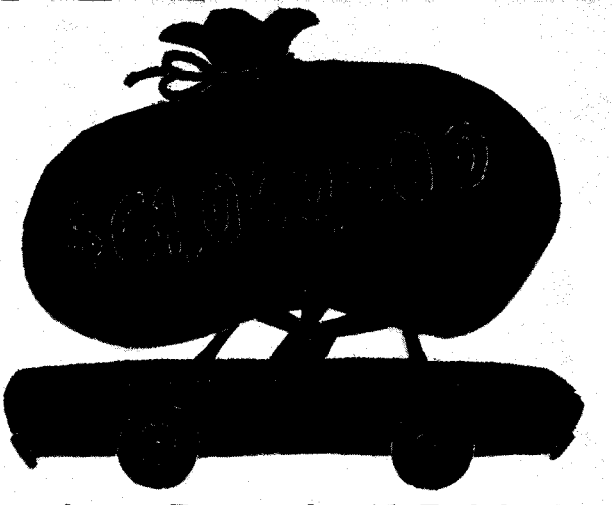

It works, too. For example, a No-Fault law became effective in Massachusetts in 1971. The first year alone saved car owners more than $61,000,000 on the cost of their auto insurance.

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bracketed by oceans in turn bracketed by small strips of the good old U.S. of A.; the edges of the map ran through Grand Forks, Oklahoma City, Fort Worth. "A new perspective," I said.

"Travel is broadening," he said.

I returned the map. "I want permission to move freely. Let me have bandages and a simple antiseptic."

"House calls," Ou-yang said, and I could not help laughing. Treason. Sorry. The laughter seized me and I struggled to control it. We would all go mad and die laughing. Perhaps the Chinese would win quickly. For the first time I contemplated the war's end, and was sobered. Perhaps the Americans would drop the bomb. Perhaps we would kill everybody and occupy Asia. Homesteaders. Frontiers. Free land for all, no more unemployment.

Deliberately I calmed myself. On a shelf behind Ou-yang stood a small white porcelain bowl inlaid with a translucent pattern of rice grains. I concentrated on the bowl. I counted the grains. Sanity returned. I craned: in the bowl were three gnarled tubers, yellow-brown.

Ou-yang was pensive, and sipped tea. This was so civilized.

"Naturally," I said, "you have my word for my good conduct."

"But is it not," Ou-yang asked politely, "every officer's duty to escape?"

"Not this time," I said. "Where? Manchuria? Siberia?"

"Not this time," he said. He appeared to be meditating vaster concepts. "Yes. It's a good idea. You must let me *think* about it."

"Is there a clinic here? For your own men?"

"We have an infirmary," he said. "Two beds, a thermometer, two medicines, one for loose *bowels* and one for constipation. We have *herbs,* for fever. We have not much of anything. Our medical people are in the lines. And the villages," he added sourly. "All war is total war now."

I agreed wearily. "Forget that. We have other problems, terrible problems. This is a real mess, the end of the world. There are men who need amputations. Transfusions. There'll be pneumonia. There's dysentery, there's internal bleeding, there's starvation. We need a whole hospital. Do you see? If I can't treat them, a lot of these men will die."

"Then they will die," Ou-yang said equably. "Many have died already."

"It's inhuman." I remember my fists were balled in my lap and I was no longer full of insane laughter. "Let me use your infirmary."

"No."

"Two hours a day. An hour."

"No."

No. Redress, petition. My congressman. The Red Cross. I bowed my head and emitted a sobbing growl, pure defeat, pain.

"You are not a permanent soldier," Ou-yang said.

"Sometimes I wonder," I said. "No. I was drafted. I think of myself as a permanent doctor. And now a permanent prisoner."

"No. Someday you will go *home.*" He smiled. "The sooner the better."

"Amen."

"Return to your hut," he said. "I will send for you."

"What are those?" Those tubers.

He turned to see, and frowned. "Wait. I forget the name in English. Like carrots."

"Turnips."

"Turnips. Pickled."

"Give them to me."

"To you?"

Glumly I sorted phrases. Oh for a world of yes and no, I live I die I love I hate. "The day may come," I said, "when we fight for a blade of grass. When we drink the wind and eat the dead. We can't count on a damn thing."

"Take them," he shrugged, and dismissed me.

Out of a white sky, sweeping across the gray Yalu, an incessant, merciless wind beat down from Manchuria. "I'm a Mediterranean type," I mourned.

At the fence Kinsella said, "They don't want us to die. We have to believe that. What did he tell you?"

"Haircuts. Soon."

"Photographers," he said. "Remember in the war they took pictures, both sides, showing off? Barbershops, volleyball."

I shivered. "Let's go back." My knees wobbled. The earth was iron-hard.

Kinsella puffed, "Maybe they'll give us a banana for the pictures, or a tennis racket."

"Better a banana."

"Refuse it," he said. "Tell your men. They're smart bastards and they'll use us. I don't know how but they'll use us."

"I asked him if we could farm in spring. He said no."

"Goddamn. An ear of corn."

"Butter. Salt." My stomach contracted, fluttered.

"I figured something out," Kinsella said. "Their turbines are all along here, the Yalu, their dams and power plants. I bet this village was workers' housing once, and they put us here so we wouldn't bomb the plants and all. It stands to reason."

"Sounds right. Small comfort."

"You're working for them."

"For us too. You rather they lock me up?"

"No skin off my ass," Kinsella said. "Just remember you're an American soldier."

"Right," I said.

"You've got an obligation to escape."

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Less weary, I might have been startled. I scuffed along, skinny and scant of breath.

"You've got an obligation to help others escape. We've been talking it over. You're in a privileged position." For a dozen paces he meditated. "Beer," he said, "I want you to bring me every scrap of information that might help."

A lunatic.

"About the guards, the fences, lights, arms, gates—anything. You have a great responsibility and a great opportunity."

"Yessir," I said.

"Has he said anything about the other camps?"

"No."

"Or where we are, exactly?"

"No."

"Goddamn. Spring and summer's the best shot, maybe early fall, lots of cover and growing things. For food."

"Right."

"If we could get to the river."

"If you could get to the river," I said, "you'd drift down into the bay. Then what? Port Arthur?"

"Our navy," he said. "These bastards have no navy. I bet our ships are patrolling right now."

I was silent. Such a mind exacted admiration.

"Find out all you can. Report to me every day."

"Yessir," I said.

I treated Turks from the Turkish Brigade, Britons from the 27th Commonwealth Brigade. "Just forget those designations," Kinsella said crisply. "You know nothing about the units."

"They know it all," I said. "How many Turkish brigades are there? Or British?"

"Just the same," Kinsella said. "How many you figure we are, all of us? You move around."

"Seven, eight hundred." Filipinos, Koreans.

"I don't suppose we could bust out."

"We couldn't bust out of a used condom," I said. "There's a hundred men dying and nobody else can even pee straight." Thus myself, concertmaster and friend of Beethoven. Gourmets may rhapsodize. Those who eat shit talk shit. In the house of the hanged man everybody mentions rope. Soon we would be speculating on the afterlife. Some would go mad: Beer first. No. I was a species of captain and would leave the ship last.

Oldridge died that night. In the morning we found him dead and I bore his dog tags to Kinsella. He was a collector of dog tags, a numismatist, a heap in a sack like a hoard of strange shillings. "It's bad," he said.

"It'll be worse," I said. "He's sent for me again."

"Tell him we're dying. We absolutely must have more food. Remind him about Nuremberg."

"Nuremberg." I made a serious effort to comprehend.

"War crimes," Kinsella said briskly.

"Right," I said.

Ou-yang's very bulk lent him authority; I felt scrawny, obsequious, a flunky. "Come with me," Ou-yang said, and I nodded dumbly. We walked beneath unshaded light bulbs, passed offices, a storeroom, a toilet—a toilet! I gaped: an Oriental toilet, one hunkered, footrests of stone, a chain. I hurried along. The infirmary: a small room, an overhead lamp, a table, cots. Three patients. "These two," Ou-yang announced, "have a *rash.* This one has a *wet* ear."

I examined, grunted, emitted the imposing sonorities of expertise. "These two should wash more often. Bathe it twice a day with potassium permanganate. All right then, alcohol. All right then, *soap,* for God's sake. This one has an infection. Keep it clean and if there's penicillin, use it."

"Ah, penicillin." Ou-yang spoke; a soldier unlocked a small cabinet. "Go ahead," Ou-yang said.

Dreamily I inspected the vial, the syringe, the needle. "You took these from me."

Ou-yang said, "Yes."

"My men are dying," I said. "They need food. They've all got pneumonia. They need medicine."

"We have no medicine. Keep them warm."

I set down the syringe. "I can't do this. I can't come here and . . . I can't . . ." What was I trying to say? I prepared the dose, administered the injection. Skin, blood, all skin was skin, all blood, blood. "Have the needle sterilized," I said. "Is this aspirin?"

"Yes."

I unscrewed the lid and took six tablets. I wrapped them in a scrap of newspaper and defied Ou-yang sullenly, an animal, a dog with a bare bone.

"Keep them," Ou-yang said. "Come with me." He spoke to a soldier. We went back to his office. Already jaded, I ignored the toilet. Ou-yang told me to be *seated.* "We have no food," he said. "It goes to the front lines. All over China people are *hungry.* Some are starving. We have had the country only one year, and there is so much to do. Did you think we *wanted* this war?" He brooded, stocky and sad. "When there is food it will be *distributed.* We are not torturers."

"That may be too late," I said. "We have scurvy now, lots of it."

Ou-yang shrugged. He gestured and a stately, plump, bald corporal came from the doorway bearing a bowl of rice on which lay two crossed leeks. I gobbled, shoveling the food into a parched mouth. "Tea? Is there tea?" Ou-yang himself poured. I guzzled, and was abruptly and savagely overcome by shame; my throat closed. I pondered that. Then I summoned up all my moral corruption, and ate. In joyous iniquity I cleaned my plate; there are children starving in China.

"You have no right," Kinsella said flatly.

"Here," I said. "Take three."

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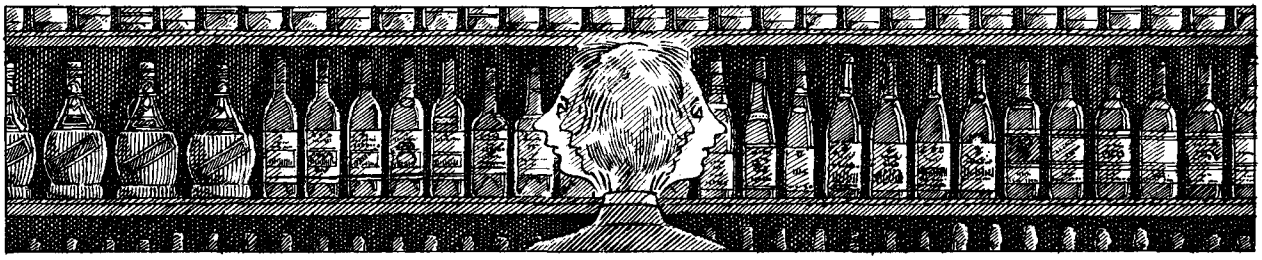
IF YOU FEEL LOST IN A WINE STORE, HERE'S HOW TO FIND YOURSELF.



The difficult thing about buying wine is that there are so many wines to buy.

On the one hand, we're fortunate that there are so many good wines from which to choose.

On the other, the over 500 different kinds of wine, and the hundreds of different brands of each, domestic and imported, make the task of learning about wine almost impossible. Most people throw up their hands when confronted with so many choices and just grab a bottle because they like the label.

We at Inglenook Vineyards realize it's impossible to make a wine expert of you in one ad. But we can give you some pointers and a basic starting point, so that you'll have a better idea of how to go about buying wine.

TIP NO. 1: START SOMEWHERE.

First off, you need a starting point. You should become thoroughly familiar with four or five wines. Then when you try new wines, you'll have a basis for comparison.

We've arbitrarily listed five wines below which we feel are a good place to start. They're not the final answer, of course, because there is none. But they do represent five totally different, easy to distinguish tastes.

FIVE BASIC TASTES TO START WITH.

Name	Color	Taste
Pinot Chardonnay	White	Dry
Sylvaner Riesling	White	Semi-Dry
Charbono	Red	Dry
Gamay Beaujolais	Red	Semi-Dry
Gamay Rosé	Rosé	Dry

TIP NO. 2: BE HUMBLE.

When you go to buy these wines, don't be afraid to admit you're not the world's foremost expert on wine. There are so many wines, and vintages, and so forth that it's safe to say that *nobody* is the world's foremost expert on wine. So get all the help you can.

There is usually one person in every wine store who knows more than you do—the manager. Get his opinions on vintages, vintners, and the like. But make sure he drinks and enjoys wine regularly himself. If this is the case, you've chosen the right store, and found someone who can save you years of fiddling around in the dark.

TIP NO. 3: READ THE LABEL.

The better wines are generally produced and bottled solely at the winery.

This insures almost total control of a wine's production by the vintner. So look for the words "Produced and Bottled by." In French, these words read, "mis en bouteilles au chateau" and in German the term is "Original Abfullung." Otherwise the wine could have been made in one place, blended in another, and aged in still another.

Even better are the words, "Estate Bottled." This means that the grapes were grown under control of the vintner and in the vicinity of the vintner's chateau or estate. Only a few American wines bear this marking, and finding one in a wine store is a good way to find yourself.

Which leads us to Inglenook.

TIP NO. 4: SPEND MONEY.

Unfortunately, the age old saying "you get what you pay for" is generally true when it comes to wine.

Meticulous tending of grapes and vines costs money, vintaging costs more money, and estate bottling costs even more.

And even though we all know someone who picked up a bottle of 99¢ imported wine and raved about it for years, you have to write it off to chance. For it just isn't possible to consistently produce great wine at a low cost.

Inglenook Estate Bottled wine is the most expensive wine made in America.

It comes from the Napa Valley, it's all vintage dated, and it's all produced and bottled by us.

So the next time you get that old lost feeling when buying wine, let Inglenook be your guide.

ESTATE BOTTLED

Inglenook

NAPA VALLEY
GAMAY BEAUJOLAIS
1985

INGLENOOK

Not just for profit, but for reputation.

This ad is one of a series. If you'd like copies of other ads, send your name and address to Inglenook Vineyards, Box 527, Dept. D, San Francisco, CA 94101.

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"What is it?"

"Aspirin."

"Aspirin! Goddamn, man, that's no help."

"He said there was no food. When it comes we'll have it. I told him it might be too late."

"You're *fraternizing!*" Kinsella said. "Damn you, Beer, you're in trouble!"

"You're kidding," I said.

"You're a soldier," he said. To myself I acknowledged now, hardly hearing him as he rattled on, that I had never known what it was to be a real soldier: to wake with energy, to love plans and tactics and camouflage and the heart-stopping glimpse of an enemy in your sights, the lilting recoil; the satisfying, how satisfying it must be if you love it at all, contortions of flopping dolls that had intended your death and met their own. The coffee and the cigarettes and the tall stories about other battles, women, legendary sergeants, enfilades.

"I had a sergeant once," I said, "who used to take us out for grenade practice and tell us to watch out for flyin derbis."

"You what?"

"Flyin derbis," I said.

"Goddamn," Kinsella said. "What's that all about?"

"Right," I said.

So I roved my little hell, stumbled over corpses, made my rounds without instruments, without medicine, without hope. I offered vain advice, instructed men in nursing care. I excised dead flesh with a long fingernail, with a contraband metal spoon. I displayed the aspirin to my men, who crowded around me and exclaimed. Trezevant was appointed its keeper. A cold rain persisted, and dark earth swelled through the snow like mange on a polar bear. There was no news of the war. What war? I had a vision: the war was over, the others had all gone home, and these here were penitents, this was their infernal landscape, their limbo, each had killed or betrayed, committed undefined sacrilege, inexpiable. Cuttis went on living, freckled and friendly. Scafa declined. Bewley conversed with Jesus. I stood gaping at the Yalu like a village idiot, and adjured myself to survive.

We were much beset, and business picked up. In every hut a miser's hoard of dog tags. My own still lost. I could steal a pair and be anyone ever after. Never. I am that I am. One morning, Collins, sleeping like a fetus, was unable to straighten his legs. "Jesus Christ," he shouted, "I'm paralyzed!" I examined him, stringy Collins, never fat and now all sticks and stones. Wearily but gently, gratefully, it was an occupation, *mon métier,* I massaged him. Trezevant brought him hot water to sip. The left leg relaxed, millimeter by millimeter slacked and stretched. Ewald worked at the right leg. In half an hour Collins was walking. Ewald went so far as to smile.

I conferred with Trezevant, and he made the announcement: "Only one way to stay alive and this is it, so you men listen. From now on you get up in the morning when we tell you. Never mind seven o'clock and never mind the Chinese. We get you up. Then you wash. And you wash Cuttis and Scafa and anybody else real sick. After chow you police the hut and the grounds. After that you sit down and hunt lice. You dig 'em out and you pop 'em. From now on we fetch wood every day and not every second day. Also, in that room by Cuttis, we make a checkerboard on the floor. We use stones for checkers and every man gets to play two games every day, and you keep track. A tournament, you hear? Prizes to be announced later. And every day before lunch, calisthenics."

The bitching groan was the first truly human noise out of them in weeks.

But next morning they balked, jeered, cursed. Collins refused to rise at all, and took his ease. Sunderman and Ewald, the firewood detail, shrugged: "Plenty time tomorrow." I looked to Trez for iron, for bone; Trez too shrugged. Trez, Bewley, and I turned out for calisthenics. We stood in the wind, hopeless and aimless. "Well, let's do a few," Trez said. We did a few, and returned to the warm hut.

Then Mulberg guttered. For some days he sat mute, staring into his past. The others shied. It was his business. Yuscavage complained of the shoulder. Bewley prayed in a tenor drone and said, "Jesus the best healer." Mulberg ate mechanically or not at all. Then he spent most of several days lying down. "There's some like that in every hut," Kinsella said.

"It's not sickness," I said. "Not like the scurvy." My own legs were agony at night. Murderous.

"What do you think?"

"I don't know," I said. "Maybe he's going crazy. I'll do something."

With Trez I went in to Mulberg, who had removed his jacket and covered his head with it. "Mulberg," I called; there was no answer. Trez shook him and nothing happened. "Chow time," I said. Nothing. Together we raised him to a sitting position and I unwrapped his head, then slapped him twice. Modern medicine. He blinked and growled. "Ewald," I called, "bring a bowl of soup." Dull of eye, Ewald would not stir; Trez fetched the millet. He pried Mulberg's mouth open and I poured soup into it. Mulberg gagged, flopped, spat, and twisted away. We tried again. He roared and spewed. I slapped him again: "Don't waste food." It was all so useless. But he swallowed the next mouthful; we made him finish, and left him. Next morning we did it again. After chow Mulberg urinated on the floor, lying brutish on his side, his hose limp, spraying; Trez and I were not so much

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disgusted by bad manners as revolted by gross ignobility. We dragged him outside, stood him up, and played medicine ball with him: shoved him back and forth until he fell, dragged him erect and shoved him some more. We stripped him and threw pebbles at him. He protected his jewels. We tore his hands away; he fought. He rose and howled. He lunged for his pants. We let him dress. "No more shit," Trezevant said. Mulberg stood there panting. "Jumping jacks," Trezevant ordered and counted. Mulberg executed ten jumping jacks and glowered.

"Three of them just died," Kinsella said. "They just lay down and died."

"Force them," I said. "Humiliate them. Go for the balls."

We kept a few more alive. What for?

In early March a social event, a dizzying week. First haircuts, the men sheared, suddenly children, gangling, morons. Then Ou-yang sent for me. He trembled with courteous effort but finally guffawed. "I must parade you all. You will look like a, a, a field of *melons.*"

I smiled sheepishly. Samson, shorn, hot with embarrassment, uneasy, squirming, and not tragic at all. Disproportion, chagrin. Vast ears. Dying bums with lice.

"I have some extremely *good* news," Ou-yang said.

I believed nothing and only waited.

Ou-yang's hand rose, a magician's swoop, and a necklace glittered and dangled.

"My dog tags." I was full of wonder.

"And," Ou-yang declaimed, "a box of cigarettes, and a bag of dried peas. And very soon there will be soybeans for your men. Protein."

Dried peas. Soybeans. I tamed a rush of tears.

"So," I told Kinsella, "I patched him up. No idea who he was," and I added awkwardly, perturbed, unquiet, "under duress."

Kinsella was silent and severe.

"It seems he was a political officer, young, rising, God knows, important, brilliant. So I got a reward. And my dog tags back."

Kinsella's hand waited. I dropped the necklace into it. He read, nodded, returned it; I looped it into place, a debutante, pearls. "My bunch come first," I said, "but there's these left over." Kinsella took the box, sniffed at it, offered; I declined. He fished at his waistband and produced matches; he lit a cigarette pensively, inhaled, blew smoke, a reverie, jets from his nose. He smiled. "Goddamn."

"You're trading with the enemy."

"The hell I am. They owe us a damn sight more than this."

"That's something else. He says there's soybeans coming."

"Soybeans." He inhaled again, smiled again. I thought again of newsreels.

"Soybeans are full of good stuff," I said. "Protein."

"Soybeans are for cattle."

"That's us," I said. "Also, this weather's good. Maybe we've hit bottom. Maybe it gets better now."

"Maybe," Kinsella said. "Maybe it's time to crack out of here."

"Right," I said.

We mashed the dried peas in boiling water for Scafa and Cuttis, and I fed them, more useful now, a man with a purpose. I slept with the cloth bag—the peas might last a week—and awoke the first night when Sunderman's hand brushed my face. I didn't know it was Sunderman until I jumped for the bulb, shouting, and scared them all. They scurried and panicked and we lined them up and Trez found the bag in Sunderman's pants. We all stood around quietly, no one moving much or offering suggestions. They were waiting for me to be an officer, but I did not feel at all like an officer. I felt feverish and I tried, made an honest effort (man of the world, doctor, Jew) to do something about the prickles and surges of pure rage, of lunacy almost, that rose and fell; I was trembling inside, and I looked miserably from man to man and probably I would have left Sunderman to them. But Sunderman was also insane and bolted for the door. I grabbed him, a mad dog now, the old corporal; I pushed him off and hit him on the mouth. He caught me on the temple with a right hand and I drove inside it, both arms pumping, to the ribs, the belly, and when he crouched I drew off and hit him where the jaw meets the neck, under the ear, and he went down sideways and slid to the dirt floor. "Pig," I panted, "pig," and the word meant everything. He was conscious and lay there sobbing. The men observed him almost without interest. Trezevant poked at him, big toe to his butt, and said, "All right now. It's over." Sunderman sat up crying, snuffling, four years old, and much—of manhood, passion, hope, resolution—drained out of me. I felt it go. I was very tired. I retrieved my bag of peas and went back to my patch of floor, and lay on my back, and knew that there would be no escape, and that this was the war we had all feared always, the war that would never end. Soon I was crying too. In the morning Scafa was dead.

Kinsella accepted the dog tags and said, "I hear you struck an enlisted man."

"Several times." The warm spell persisted, and the snow was almost gone; bits of green seemed to shout from the earth, and I no longer cared. "Why?" "He stole food. Food for the sick."

"You can't maintain discipline by striking enlisted men."

"There is no discipline."

"Yes there is," Kinsella said, "and it's the only hope."

That was unanswerable.

"Don't do it again," he said.

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"Yessir."

"How many dead now?"

"Two in my hut. About one in four, all around, maybe one in three."

"Goddamn," he said. "But it's warmer. Dysentery?"

"My two were. Plenty of that, and pneumonia and scurvy and wounds still open."

"It's inhuman," he said. "And no soybeans yet."

"I quit," I said, and left him. On my way back to the hut I saw a weed, a plain ordinary green weed, the kind with flat leaves and many veins, and I pulled it up and gave it to Trezevant by way of valedictory. "Put it in the pot," I said. "Tell them to find weeds, any kind, and put them in the pot." Then I lay down and did not rise. Trez tried to force-feed me and I pulled rank. "Don't lay a hand on me."

I dreamed. I dreamed of a school of fish, a bed of oysters: I was underwater with a sack, hovering, slithering, drifting, one floating foot set uncertainly after another in the swirling blue murk; I was harvesting sea cucumbers, greens, greens; and sea slugs, protein, protein. I swept a dozen oysters into my sack, and fish followed, silvery fish with blue and yellow stripes and long, fragile, trailing fins, and then I saw a hole in the sack and all was lost, no air now. I thrashed, and woke.

Later Kinsella came and said, "Benny, we got sick people. Get up out of there." I made no answer. He stormed and hollered; I heard him, miles away, but I was tired, and tugged the jacket over my head and closed my eyes.

Kinsella ripped the jacket away, pulled me up, and slapped me hard. I smiled faintly and fell back. I knew what he was doing and I approved; he was a good man, a fine fellow, but no. I was at the bottom of the sea and would not rise. I sank into the mud, and my heartbeat slowed. "Oh get up," he said, snarled, "get up." Soon I would die. We were all dying. I would die in three or four weeks. I wished Kinsella would shut up and go away.

His face was close to mine, and I could feel his breath. "Get up," he whispered. "You goddamn yellow kike, get up."

Dimly, deeply, I knew his purpose; dimly, deeply, I knew him for my friend, my rock, my major; but I shot up from the floor of the sea, broached with a shriek, and struck for the throat. He slammed me against the wall and agony boiled through me, he had broken me, no air, I tried to shout; my lungs filled, sweet, sweet, salvation! and I wept, and wept, and Kinsella was cradling me and saying it's all right Benny, it's all right Benny, goddamn them, it's all right Benny, the soybeans are here. And then he said, this Cuchulainn, a most astonishing thing, and most fiercely he said it. "Man," he said, "remember you weren't born a Jew for nothing."

Ou-yang sent for me and introduced me to two subordinates, Wei something and Chang something. Wei was to be our political officer and Chang the military commandant. Ou-yang would stay on as chairman of the board. He praised me to the others. They smiled thin, polite acknowledgment. Ou-yang spoke in Chinese and Wei warmed a bit, cocked a friendlier brow. I never learned what had been said. Ou-yang went on, "Your MacArthur has been sent home in disgrace." "Ma ka ta," Wei said, and laughed.

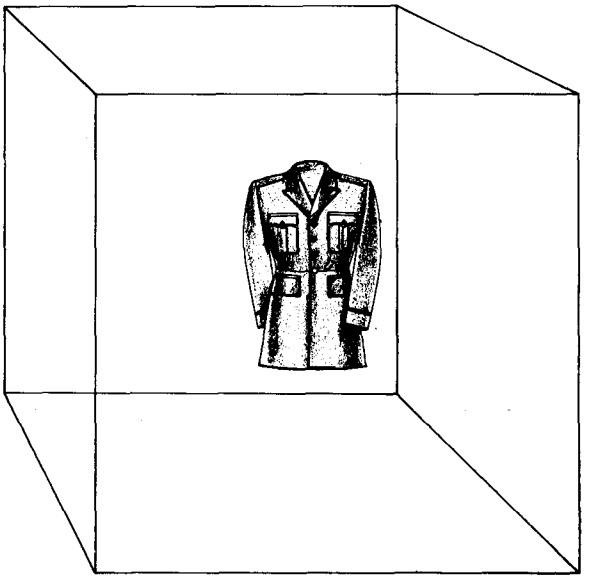
I goggled. A woman? Peculations? What disgrace? Who in the world could send him anywhere, our own Heliogabalus? "A *matter* of policy, I think," Ou-yang said. "Too many planes over there," he pointed to Manchuria, "and a couple, it seems, *all* the way to Vladivostok. Apparently the United States is not yet ready to *liberate* China and Russia." He laughed heartily, a luncheon-club laugh, jolly good fellow.

In an hour the whole camp knew. Mulberg rejoiced. "They'll end the goddamn war."

Even Kinsella persuaded himself. "Goddamn," he said. "That means they quit. They won't come north again. Goddamn. Why didn't they drop the bomb? What's it *for?*" He paced, the military mind clicking along. "All right. A shift in policy. Stabilization, maybe a truce, prisoner exchange. It stands to reason. All right. Could be worse." Pacing, muttering. "What the hell. Just as well. We'd have had to tunnel a quarter-mile. Unless they let us swim." He peered at the river. "Long swim. Christ, maybe it's good news."

"Look, Major, we'll have new generals and new generals will have new plans, win the war, and they won't be as good as MacArthur's. We can't win a polite war and you know it. So they're going to fool around for a long time with their games. Bang bang. Strategy."

I thought he might dress me down, but he laughed. "Corporal Beer."



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"I'd have been a sergeant by now, and sergeants know everything."

"OK," he said, "let's ask Trezevant."

So we did. Trezevant said, "Shit, how do I know what those damn fools want to do?" Kinsella laughed like hell. I diagnosed a deep release working within him; he'd yielded to the most treacherous temptation: hope. "A chap which I talked to," Bewley said, "thinks we going home." I began to enjoy Bewley. "Lieutenant," he said, "I hear you a Hebrew." "No such luck," I said, "just a Jew." "Now you fooling with me," he said. "Lieutenant, you got to come to Jesus Christ. That's how we get out of this, when all come to Jesus Christ." The spirit of Easter lay upon him. I told him I'd think about it.

They let us each write a letter. We were Americans and assumed that the letters would be delivered. They asked us to write out a personal history. Kinsella spread the word: bare vital statistics, nothing military. They announced that a library would be made available. They began to interview the men one at a time. They announced study and discussion groups, some compulsory. A new grain was added to the soup; I never knew what it was, but it was bulkier and mealier than the millet. Days were longer and the sun held steady. Yuscavage disappeared. He was simply no longer with us. Ou-yang said only that he was safe and well. Then he ordered me to live with the officers. I could make my rounds but must live with Kinsella's bunch. This was a time of confusion. No one was friendly or unfriendly and we all assumed that doom had passed us by, the old angel of death was just plain wore out, but some of us sensed that the future was shifty. "You know what," Kinsella said, "it's like we were here for good. Have they interviewed you yet?" They had not. "Me neither. They're up to something."

Kinsella was collating gossip; a commander without a command, he talked to himself, cogitated fiercely, speculated, demanded silence, and frowned intently.

They sent for him and he was away for four days. They had asked him to cut a recording; as senior officer he was to confirm the good treatment, food for all, medical care. Medical care. That was me. He refused. They stuck him in a dark cell with a waste bucket and hauled him out at odd hours for further discussion. He refused. They released him in honor of May Day. May Day! Union Square! I realized with sudden excitement, a great gasp at this astrological conjunction, that New York was on the same parallel of latitude as this prison camp, give or take a couple of blocks. And I saw the speakers, heard the protests: Bring Benny Home! The fan beards, the skinny Catholic vegetarian, the famous optometrist who put on a blue denim shirt and overalls and had a season; he opened on May Day and closed on Labor Day. And Jacob! Ten thousand miles due east Jacob worried, Jacob wept, Jacob badgered the government and signed petitions. He would play with Joseph, and Carol would sit grieving, hot, ripe, twenty-three and unloved.

I closed my mind to all that and listened to Kinsella. "They want propaganda. We say no. If they need propaganda they can't afford to brutalize us. I figured it out. We stand fast."

When they sent for me, he said it again: "Stand fast, Benny."

"Right," I said.

Ou-yang and Wei merely wanted me to see the classrooms—so Ou-yang called them—and the library. Prisoners sat conversing in low tones, like school kids ordered silent. In one corner a Chinese officer chatted with three of them. The first book I saw was a pamphlet—Lenin it was, *Women and Society.* Women and Society! I needed both.

I was abruptly dizzy. In the stacks, as a young man, I had always experienced a primitive visceral urge, an odd loosening of the bowels, humility in the presence of the unknown, eternity, so much still to read, so much that I would never read. Or perhaps I was slack, greedy, perhaps it was a symptom of intellectual lust; perhaps its opposite, an inadmissible desire to be thence. Now I was merely dizzy, shuttled at the speed of light to another planet, words, letters, the smell of paper and bindings. I turned away. "You are impressed," Ou-yang said.

"Yes," I said, but I was much more impressed and almost fainted when we stepped outside again and I bumped into a woman.

She wore a tan uniform, lightly padded, and she had black hair, shoulder-length, and the reddest cheeks I have ever seen, and her black eyes sparkled and she smelled like a woman. I gulped and ogled and grew hot. Ou-yang introduced us. He called me Pee-joe Die-foo and her name was Ho Wen-chen. I think. I saw her every day and soon we were making love behind the library and it was all so marvelous. No. I never saw her again. She was the first woman I had seen in five months. I have no serious idea now what she looked like, but she was unutterably beautiful and for several seconds I suffered agonies to shame the damned, the mind suddenly ignited, so wanting a woman that the body rebelled, exploded; the heart pressed out between the ribs, bones ruptured the hot flesh. She moved on. I watched her walk, watched the silky black hair float. "She assists our political instructors," Ou-yang said. "She keeps records."

They interrogated me once, and I said no, no, no, and they accepted the decision. Others had been tempted: mail privileges, better food. Most stalled and bluffed, and it became a contest, chess or go, get without giving. But Bewley

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was serious; "Give up all thou hast," he said. Ewald too; he withdrew even further and we scarcely saw him. I asked Kinsella if Cuttis might play along; he was recovering, but slowly, and the food, the quarters, the company would help. "Absolutely not," Kinsella said. "If you give them *anything* they have you."

"So what?" I was not sure why I had said no, no, no.

"So what?" Kinsella despaired of me, groaned. "They're *soldiers,*" he said. "They're still *soldiers.*"

"Yessir," I said. "Any news of the war?"

"No news of the war." He glared. "Where the hell would I hear news? You're the collaborator."

"Easy," I said, but neither of us was angry.

So it went for some weeks, and we divided, and the words "progressive" and "reactionary" became common nouns. I wondered: was it for the rewards? did they believe? were they poor farmhands struck for the first time by the lightning of learning? was it simple intellectual ecstasy, the mechanic from Provo who finds that he can speak, read, and write Sanskrit? And the others, the reactionaries, what were they defending? flag, home, mother? our shores? their own core? a good service record? Collins was defending Collins: "Fuck 'em all. I been to these lectures. In the States. *Civics.*" Mulberg hawhawhawed. I almost joined him, because there was a little of that rat in me, too: fuck 'em all. None of this shit about equality and mankind, not while you got me chained to this here wall. It was not the matter; what they were teaching was irrelevant. (Collins was right. Civics!) For the moment I did not care to be like everybody else. I did not care to be like *anybody* else. Who held out, who said no? (Ah, that monosyllable! Easiest little word in the world, and the hardest one to say, and keep saying, whether they cosset you or clip you.) Those who said no were the guttersnipes and the snobs. I was both. Nothing else mattered—race, religion or lack of it, money, none of that pushed a man one way or the other. I knew men who *were* progressive, one of them might have been a genuine communist, and they said no, maybe because they'd been saying no all their lives; and I knew a ritzy officer from Boston, and he said yes, maybe because he'd been saying yes all his life. I still don't know what it is that makes a man inviolable, but I still hope to find out.

I went back to the old hut one day to examine Cuttis and found four strangers at the door. One I recognized, a scarred street Negro named Fennimer, from Philadelphia I think. The other three were white, but all four were angry, and they all shared an aspect, an attitude: tough city kids. You could tell right away. Trezevant was holding them off, trying to soothe them. Fennimer rounded on me. "You give us that Ewald."

"What's he done?"

"Stole food. Stole two mon-toes."

Trezevant said, "What's mon-toes?"

"Steamed dough," I told him. "Back home you'd spit it out. How do you know Ewald took them?"

"We know," Fennimer said. "He was there, talking sweet shit about those slants, and then he was gone and they were gone."

"If he's so sweet with the Chinese how come he has to steal food? And where'd you get the mon-toes?"

"Up yours, officer. You give us Ewald. Now."

Ah, a touch of home and youth! "Yeah, well just hold it," I said. "How would that look, we just give you our guy like that. Ewald! You in there?"

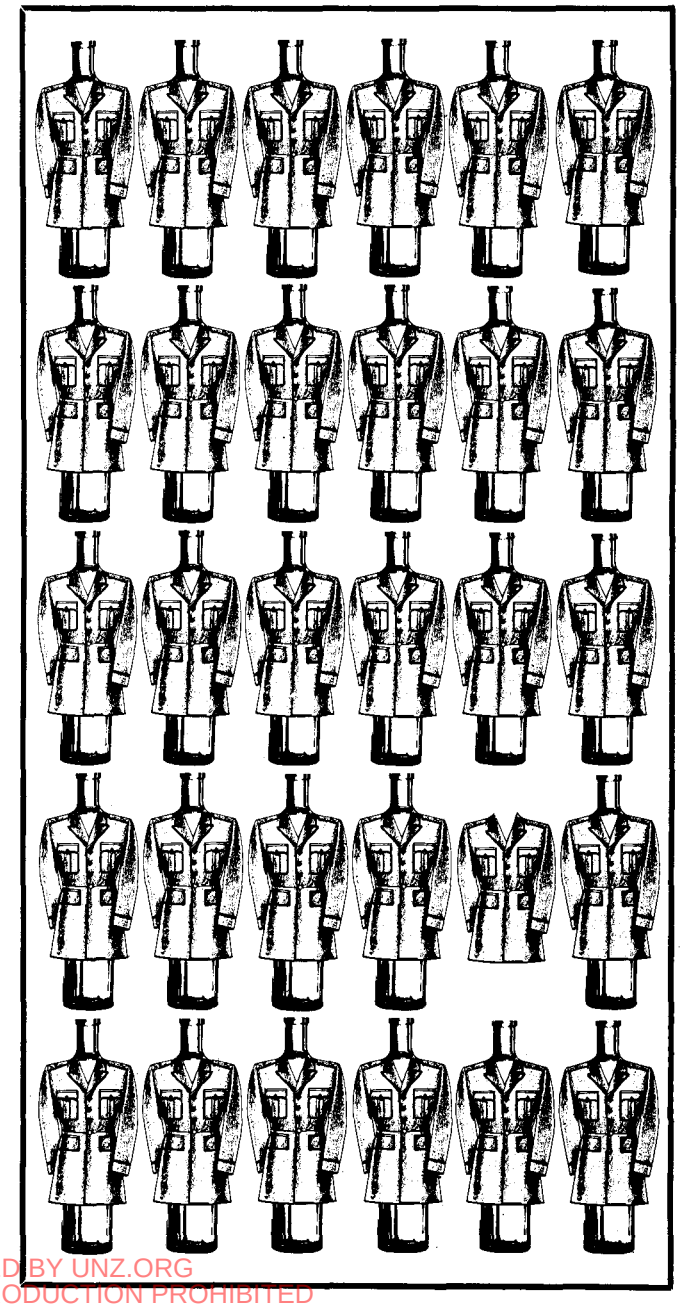
"He's in there," one of the white guys said.

"Who're you?"

"What do you care, officer?"

"Just curious. Where you from, then?"

"Scranton."



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"You guys?"

"Atlanta." "Seattle."

"New York," I said, between tears and laughter, and they heard, the big town, pops, don't mess with Benny the blade; and it sickened me, disgusted and nauseated me, this brutish street scene, quiet talk, don't draw cops, treaties broken, tribal laws, jagged broken milk bottles. Blood must answer blood. God help us.

"We ought to hang together against these people," I said. "Got plenty of fights without making more."

"Never mind these people," Fennimer said. "We're in here for *good.* For a good long time. Got to figure that way. Got no more fight with them. Got a fight with Ewald."

"Sergeant," I said, "tell Ewald I want the mon-toes."

Trezevant stepped inside, and left me alone.

"Sergeant," Scranton repeated. "Lieutenants and corporals and all. Got any eagle scouts?"

"Ordinarily I'd let you solve your own problem," I said. "But we've got plenty of sick and dying, and we're trying to save all we can."

"Can't save Ewald anyway," Fennimer said. "Unless you get him a transfer. I mean, Lieutenant, after all, sooner or later, you know."

I nodded. Truth was truth. Sooner or later, you know. "Buy him off, maybe," I said. "He's a medic. We need him. What would you want?"

They conferred in silence. Note well: four grown men, two lumps of steamed dough. The other three left it to Fennimer. He hesitated, so I made the move. "Double the mon-toes, and I'll punish him myself."

"Where you going to get mon-toes?"

"Up yours. I can get you aspirin, too."

"Aspirin? What we going to do with aspirin? That's right, though: you solid with these cats."

"Shut up about that," I said.

"Cigarettes, maybe," Fennimer said.

"Maybe."

Trezevant lazed out and leaned against the jamb, as if he would say, "Gentlemen." Instead he held forth a round white lump and said, "I got one. He ate the other one. Don't seem like much to fight about."

"Two more," Fennimer said, "and the other stuff."

"A deal," I said.

"Solid," he said. "How you going to fix Ewald?"

"There's ways," I said. "It won't happen again. But you lay off, all right? I can make trouble too."

"Last thing we want is trouble," Fennimer said, and they all grinned.

"All right then. You're in eighteen."

"That's right," Fennimer said.

"Where Sumner was."

"That's right," Fennimer said.

"By tomorrow noon," I said. "And you lay off."

"That's right, we lay off," Fennimer said. "I guess we better make it four cigarettes and four aspirins. I mean there's four of us. And you with your connections."

When they were gone Trezevant said, "Sumner?"

"Dysentery," I said. "He smelled bad. So they put him out overnight and he froze to death and they brought him back in before dawn."

"How do you know that?"

"Doctors know everything."

Life was not all crime reporting; there was also the society page, and shortly I was caught up in the mad, bubbling whirl of the international set: I was invited to dinner. Blue suit. Among the notables were Ou-yang, Wei, Chang, a few interrogators, and Dr. Li. Li Die-foo. The invitation arrived in the form of a guard who jabbed a stubby finger at me and pointed the way with a mean thumb, like a homicidal hitchhiker; Kinsella shouted after me, "Stand fast, Beer."

I was ushered into a large room where seven or eight people stood sipping tea and snapping pumpkin seeds; Ou-yang greeted me with a roar of hospitality and a clap on the shoulder, and I stood blinking and ducking like a barbarian at the court in Peking. Introductions. Li Die-foo. I shook hands, stunned. Where had he been when I needed him? Then the interrogators: colloquial English, my confusion compounded. Gossip. News of the war; my new commanding general was someone called Ridgway. Never heard of him. The Chinese were driving south, below the thirty-eighth parallel. My mind raced, slowed, dug in like harassed infantry: they were dissembling, deceiving me. I said little, nibbled pumpkin seeds, slurped tea.

"We will have surgical supplies," Dr. Li informed me, "and antibiotics."

"My men are better now or dead," I said. "What they need is good food."

"That too will improve," Li said. "We plan to conform to the highest international standards. Our goal is twenty-five hundred calories per day for each man." He nodded many times, proudly, smugly.

An interrogator said, "The baseball season has begun."

Li said, "I attended the Peking Union Medical School."

"Northwestern," the interrogator said. "Psychology."

I murmured something polite. This was scarcely credible. After dinner I would be executed, straws beneath the fingernails, the water torture. Or they would turn the conversation to book reviews and the latest vernissage and I would go mad on the spot, gangling, adrool. I groped for civilization, wit. What do you hear from Mao Tse-tung. "I had

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a friend in medical school," I said, "named Lin Li-kang. From Fukien."

"In Mandarin, Fu-*djen,*" the interrogator said primly. "Lin is a common name there, like Johnson in Minnesota."

"It is a good name for a doctor," Dr. Li said, "because–"

"Because the five lin, on the same tone, are the diseases of the bladder," I said. "He told me that."

Joyful cries, extravagant delight. "A scholar!" Li announced. "You must apply yourself, and improve your hours learning Chinese."

Almost anything would improve my hours. Li rambled on about the modern application of certain ancient simples and nostrums. Acupuncture, he said; my heart contracted, a wrench, some old joke, confusing.

We sat on wooden chairs about a wooden table. We ate rice from bowls, with chopsticks, and in the center of the table, on a wooden platter, lay a huge baked fish in sauce. There were no portions; we all attacked the fish, nipped up flakes of flesh and dropped them, saucy, into the rice; Li spooned more sauce onto mine. There were vegetables, white vegetables Li called them, and lotus root. We had little cups, too, and a man came in with earthen jugs and they poured wine into my cup, yellow wine, hot. Ou-yang rose to propose a toast in Chinese; it was to Mao, so I did not participate, nothing personal you understand, and waited to be ejected; the bouncer would pad in, a wrestler, grab me by the nape and seat, and fling. They ignored me. A toast of my own, I should offer a toast, but to whom? Harry Truman? George Washington? Benedict Arnold. I knew I should not be there. Photographs. Benny Beer in the fleshpots, among the heathen. Disgrace, loss of citizenship, automobile insurance canceled. After a suitable interval, establishing moral defiance, I sipped. "No, no," Li said. "Dry cup, dry cup." The cups were tiny, three thimblefuls; I quaffed. The cup was filled instantly, magically. The fish diminished, vanished; no bones? Many cups were dried. Not so many by me. I explained to Li that my system was now delicate and my good health of supreme importance to some eight hundred men. Actually I had about forty patients, but you know how it is the first year. "Very wise," he said. I belched, Aeolian, sforzando. "Good, good," he said. "A compliment to the chef." I smiled weakly and patted my mouth with the back of my hand. Soup was served. Delicious, intoxicating, utterly new to me. "Walnut soup," Li said, "for extraordinary occasions."

"It's very good," I said uneasily. I was a penniless diner awaiting the bill, the crisis. What did they want of me?

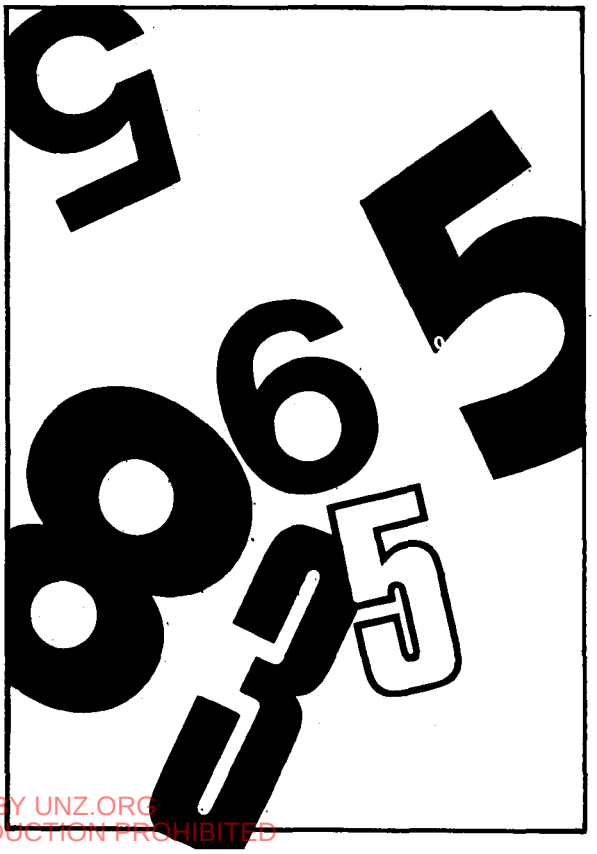
Nothing. We babbled, some in Chinese and some in English; spoke of the war, the warm spring, Mao Tse-tung's plans for flood control, the TVA. A love feast. I was frightened. But also full. My God I was full. On a bowl of rice and a mouthful of fish. A little drunk, too. Foreign guest. Big nose. Invader, rapist. What next? Honorary citizenship. Exile. My interrogator friend asked me if I knew a place called The Blue Note. I did not. Great place, he said. Hawkins, he said. Tatum. I told him that I had once met Tatum but that I was a fiddler. Heifetz, he said. Paganini. Tomorrow they would clap someone into solitary and tonight we ate and drank and chattered of Shakespeare. They did not look at all alike. One of the interrogators was my idea of Genghis Khan: squat, powerful, a moustache. Another was a beardless Confucius, skinny, ascetic. One was wall-eyed. Ou-yang was jovial and hostly. The war was discussed again, the inevitable victory of the Chinese. Of the Koreans, someone corrected, and they all said oh yes, yes, the Koreans. Asia for the Asiatics, someone said, and Ou-yang spoke swiftly in Chinese, a rebuke. A brief silence. More gossip. Li was lecturing on blood types, geographical distribution, many races, religions, and blood types, and I was nodding, wearied by café society, when a rush of sound jerked my head erect and stopped my breath. Ou-yang smiled.

"What's that?" I was trembling and in pain.

"Radio Peking," Ou-yang said. "Does that surprise you?"

"No," I said. "*No.* That's Haydn."

I stood up; they fell silent. I choked, in my excitement gasped and hummed. I knew the quartet,



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the movement, three-four; my pulse beat in threes, and the music soared, quavered, hovered, swooped. I sank back heavily, stupefied. I let go then, and sat weeping, and wept to the end. When it was over Ou-yang handed me a cigarette and said I had better go now. It was obvious that I was tired. As I left a waiter came in with a stack of hot towels; I paused, and watched them wash their hands and mouths, fastidiously, like so many satraps.

I told Kinsella that a Chinese doctor had arrived and we had talked about medicine. He smoked the cigarette and told me to be careful.

Too late. Anyway, the careful man dies of bedsores. Within a couple of days eight hundred prisoners knew that Dr. Beer, that prick, had caroused with the enemy. Roast duck, whiskey, cigars. Conversations dwindled at my approach. Kinsella drew me aside. "I want the truth." I told him the truth. He astonished me: "Oh what the hell," he said. "Christ, I heard you had women." I laughed hysterically for some seconds. "I'll shut them up," he said.

But then ten men were rounded up for stealing food, not from each other but from a storeroom near the library, where perhaps a prog had spied and squealed, and Fennimer and his friends were among them. They were taken away for a time and it was announced that their rations would be cut, which was infuriating; they would be denied classroom and library privileges, which was merely amusing; they would receive no tobacco, which was definitely comic; or mail, which was hilarious, since no one had seen so much as a postcard. It was less hilarious two days later when a few dozen men, all progressives but one, received a letter apiece, among them Pfc. Bewley, Corporal Ewald, and Lieutenant Beer. That night I was court-martialed by Kinsella, two captains, and two lieutenants. Kinsella raged. He had warned me. Stand fast, Beer. Ou-yang had mousetrapped me. The men were saying I had informed on the thieves. "Don't be a fool," I said.

"Don't you be a fool," he stormed. "Of course you didn't. Goddamn, of course not. Last man in the whole goddamn camp to do that. Any of you others think he did?"

The others did not think so.

"But you let them split you off," he said. "Why should the men hold out if their officers betray them? Christ, man, we had little enough left. Why should they trust any of us now?"

I had no answer. Lucky Benny, the man in the middle. Gloomily I considered Ou-yang. He would not force me. He would isolate me and tempt me with Haydn and fish. Why? Why should he want me? What could I give him beyond doctoring, and he knew I'd give him that gratis? Cosmic forces at work, galactic intrigue, my soul at stake. "What does he want?"

"Not you," Kinsella said. "Not one officer more or less. He wants converts, but mostly he wants to demoralize us. He wants to show the world a lot of reformed sinners. Show the slant world and Africa and all of them. It stands to reason."

We were sitting on the dirt floor, all but Kinsella; he stood, feet apart, shoulders square, chin high, a general chewing out a whole division.

"OK. What do I do?"

They debated. I could stay with the Turks, or the British. No; they too knew. I could rebel and have myself popped into the hole. No; they'd say it was a trick.

"I could cut my throat," I said.

"You may yet. Goddamn you. What kind of puppy dog are you? You like everybody."

"That's a hell of a thing to say about a man." The letter was in my waistband, between my shorts and my belly.

"Anyway," Kinsella said, "you're confined to quarters. We'll try to square you outside, but stay put."

It was from Carol. Often I could not remember her face. Joseph was well. Joseph would be a year old. "What about doctoring?"

"Forget it."

"If they send for me?"

"You have to go. But you won't doctor."

"Shucks," I said, "that's what I signed on for."

"You signed on to fight for your country."

"I didn't sign on. I was drafted. To doctor."

"To doctor your own."

My own. "A doctor's like a virgin. He is or he isn't."

"Sonny boy," my major said, "you just lost your cherry."

I followed orders and remained in the hut. Ou-yang sent for me and I explained that he had his own doctor now, and more coming, as he had told me, and that it was not seemly for me to neglect my own patients for consultations with the, ah, adversary. He discussed humanity. Dr. Li clucked and mentioned my duty to mankind. "Yessir," I said. Ou-yang informed me coldly that I must no longer use the library. I must understand that there were difficulties with the mail, both incoming and outgoing. I was marched back to my hut. "Ewald's cut another record," Kinsella said. "I suppose it was him informed."

"That may be my fault too," I said, and when pressed could not explain.

Carol loved me. I read her letter many times a day over the next two months. In the morning I took light exercise. I ate properly. I talked little. It was a time of unflagging stupor. The Chinese disliked me and the prisoners despised me. My roommates were cordial but remote. Often I lay awake at night. Often I remembered Carol's body, but not with my own, with my

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mind only. Doubtless a failure of the imagination, emotion disconnected in this infinite tranquillity. I wondered if I would ever love anyone again. Love. I pondered war and decided that men liked it. Statistically. In a large population the number of men who love to kill is sufficient to form a modern army. War was here to stay. If men would die sooner than eat rats, then surely they would die in droves, singing vigorously, for any higher reason; would die willingly, proudly. Proud to die! Unspeakable. I was too inanimate for disgust and simply contemplated the obscenity: men were proud to die. And how much prouder to kill!

And what was I proud of? Once upon a time, making love. Once upon a time, healing. Shameful admission: I had been proud to be what I was. Schmuck! No despair? Four walls, silence, Benny the nothing. I was not angry and not sorry for myself. I was in limbo and it seemed not unnatural. Normal. A room. Food. Warmth. Doubtless I would be expelled in time, into a new and strange world.

Ewald was now a librarian, they said, living it up in a prog hut. Trezevant and Cuttis were well; so were Mulberg and Collins. Auld lang syne. Class of 1950.

In June I sat outside and was tanned.

We went swimming in the Yalu. My fellow officers were a guard of honor. Solidarity. Benny is one of us. Kinsella swam, dived, spouted spray. They laughed and ducked one another. They returned to the hut much cheered. In the bay our navy patrolled. Later I sorted the dead men's dog tags, a form of higher crossword puzzle. Many races, religions, blood types. I read Carol's letter. Jacob was well.

One day in the middle of July, I was squatting, hunkered down like an Oriental peasant or a toad, except that with my face to the sun I was wondering how it was to be a turtle. I remember that: it would be good to be a turtle, I thought. I had seen them, brown and orange and green, lying on rocks in the sun, and it was a good life, free of malice. My eyes were shut against the hot yellow light. I was waiting for a princess to kiss me. I heard men shouting, playing a game perhaps, and I opened my eyes a slit to look at them. We were at the crest of a slope and I could see many huts, and men were piling out of the huts and congregating where they could, a mass of agitated blue beetles, and the shouting rose and fell against a wash of voices, like a crowd at a game, so I knew that the world had changed.

I stood up. My fellow officers came to stand beside me. We looked at one another and were puzzled. And then a squad of Chinese marched toward us, along the wire, and Ou-yang was in the midst of them, striding importantly like a prince among courtiers. They came to our hut, and Kinsella stepped forward. The squad halted, and Ou-yang pushed between two of them and stood facing Kinsella. All over the camp men were buzzing and hollering. I decided we had bombed Peking.

Ou-yang said, "Major Kinsella."

"Colonel," Kinsella said.

"I am happy to inform you, officially," Ou-yang said, "that this week, along the thirty-eighth parallel, there was a meeting of Chinese, Koreans, and Americans, at which negotiations began for a truce."

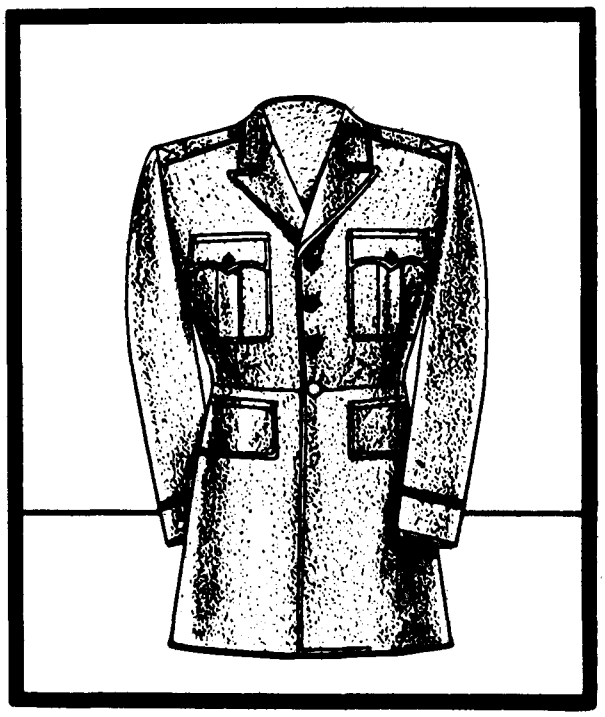
We were stunned. Shocked speechless and groping. His words had a meaning but we could not grasp it. The sun was intolerably bright.

"You may join your men," Ou-yang said.

After a breathless moment Kinsella said, "Thank you," whispering, "thank you," and stepped around Ou-yang, floated, tiptoed around the squad, and flew down the hill in long, ecstatic, gliding strides, and the others flew leaping after him. I stood where I was, and Ou-yang and I locked eyes, a peculiar exchange, smoldering, outlandish, monstrous, homosexual, secret understandings. Causeless and bizarre: it smote me. Again across centuries and continents. Linked, wedded, a common ancestor: ponies, flocks, stars; the passionate doomed unity of human blood.

I heard my name shouted. "Benny!" Kinsella called. "Goddamn it, come on. Come home, Benny, all is forgiven," and he stared into the sun and laughed, and the others whooped and yodeled, and I ran to catch up, screaming and yipping, jumping and skipping, and then we were all hugging each other, all races, religions, and blood types.

We waited two years. □



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ALKAN

by Henry Shultz

Is he Charles Henri Valentin Morhange, Alkan, the False Dimitri, or the Barber of Seville?

In a day when every American family has at its fingertips even the smallest details from the biographies of such famous musicians as Beethoven and Chaminade—to take examples from only the second and third letters of the alphabet—it comes as a surprise to learn that the average music lover, except in our largest cities, still knows next to nothing of the life and works of ALKAN, whose name begins with the letter A.

Yet the circumstances of ALKAN's death are spectacular and bizarre to a degree unprecedented before his day.

ALKAN'S DEATH AND SURPRISING WILL

On March 29, 1888, while ALKAN is seated in his study reading *The Barber Shop Gazette,* an American publication, his bookcase suddenly topples over and snuffs out his life. The bookcase is twenty feet long, nearly eighteen inches deep, and sixteen feet high. It contains works by all the leading authors as well as a considerable collection of esoterica. It is said to have weighed "a ton."[1]

ALKAN's will is found after his death in the bottom drawer of the bookcase. It has taken a week to set the bookcase upright and restore all the books to their places, and ALKAN in the meanwhile has been buried in the "Musicians' Corner" of the Cimetière Gaston Lachaise. His relatives are astonished to learn that under the terms of the will his body is to be stuffed "par un taxidermiste compétent" (by a competent taxidermist) and presented to the Louvre.

The body is exhumed at once and turned over to Professeur Brillhac, whose establishment at that time is located south of the Boulevard Huysmans, but who, despite certain difficulties, does the best he can. The Louvre, however, exercises its Right of Refusal.

The stuffed body is then offered to the Bibliothèque Nationale, the Ecole Normale, and the Cathedral of Notre Dame. None is able to find room for it. It receives a resting place at last in the London School of Economics, which, by way of precedent, has already accepted Mozart's head for exhibition. The Queen, tired of having to look at Mozart's head every time she passes through the gates of Windsor Castle, has in 1883 ordered it removed from the pike on which it is impaled and more fittingly displayed in the prestigious educational institution.

ALKAN'S NAME

The mystery attaching to ALKAN's name has yet to be satisfactorily resolved. The Secretary of the "Société des Amis de Charles Valentin Alkan," writing from the Society's secretariat at Ft. Churchill (Canada), asserts categorically that the name is derived from a strange cabalistic sign which ALKAN's mother saw in the heavens the night before he was born.

On the other hand, ALKAN's sister, who was said to be the oldest living inhabitant of the "Bois de Boulogne," and who was previously a ladies' barber in the foreign quarter of the city of Seville (Spain), tells the musical correspondent of a neighborhood newspaper published south of the Boulevard Huysmans that the name is an anagram for a

[1]A French ton weighs approximately 5280 pounds.

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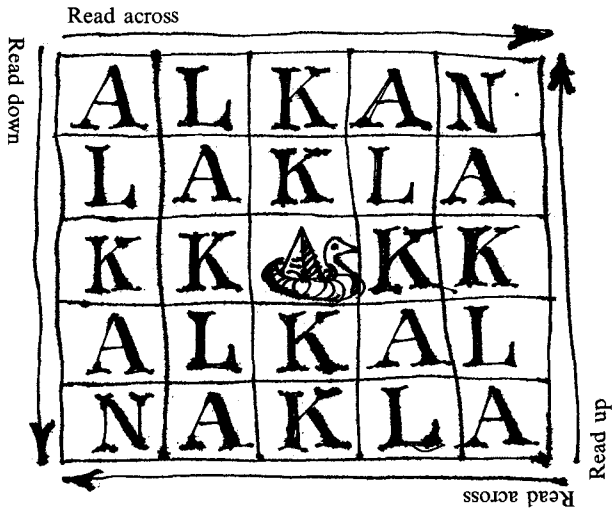
rare fruit found only in the temperate zone, for which her mother developed an insatiable craving when pregnant—though whether with Charles Valentin or one of her other children is not stated.



ALKAN AT THE CONSERVATOIRE

When ALKAN is four and a half, his father, happening to hear him improvising one day on a theme from *The Barber of Seville,* locks the piano and hides the key in his morocco porte-cigare. He wants his son to become a veterinarian. The boy, however, discovers where the key is hidden and at night, after the family has retired, steals up to the attic, where the piano is kept, and improvises until dawn. He develops poor eyesight and numerous bad habits but is nevertheless accepted as a student at the Conservatoire six months later.

ALKAN remains at the Conservatoire for the next five years, studying *harmonie* (harmony), *contrepoint* (counterpoint), *solfège* (solfège), and other subjects then in vogue at the Conservatoire, under a succession of masters, but is expelled for handing out exploding cigars to his fellow students in the library.

ALKAN has a stretch of three octaves and can compose with either hand. His memory is phenomenal and he has almost "absolute pitch."

ALKAN AS A YOUNG MAN

As a young man, ALKAN is invited to Russia to give lessons on the harmonium to Madame von Meck. Madame von Meck wishes to learn to play the harmonium so that she can accompany her peasants when they dance their aboriginal dances on her estate, twenty versts from Moscow. His salary is fifty rubles a week, plus room and board and a bottle of *vodka* (native Russian wine) on the Czar's wedding anniversary.

Despite these advantages, however, ALKAN soon returns to Paris, diffidently confessing to a fear of wolves. Wolves are still to be seen at this period on the smaller Russian estates, called *dashikis,* where in winter they sometimes pursue children on their *troikas* (tricycles) and snap at the postman.

Madame von Meck, sorry to lose her agreeable young teacher, gives him a handsome wolf-robe as a going-away present. ALKAN is not ungrateful but he never wears it. Later, in Paris, he repacks the wolf-robe in the box of a fashionable *boutique* (lady fur-dealer) and has it delivered to the Countess Teresa Guiccioli on her name day. The wolf from which the robe is made has been shot by Madame von Meck's oldest daughter not a dozen versts from her mother's harmonium. A statue commemorating this event formerly stood in the village square but was later melted down by the Bolsheviks.

ALKAN AT THE FOLIES-BERGERES

The year 1877 finds ALKAN with his colleagues César Franck and Mademoiselle de Maupin at the Folies-Bergères, which they have rented for the entire evening in order to entertain a large party of friends. ALKAN plays his newly composed *Elégie caractéristique pour piano seul d'après Le Barbier de Seville.* Franck throws darts at the *derrières* (knees) of the cancan girls. Mademoiselle de Maupin exchanges kisses for American cigarettes. There is much merriment, for these are carefree days.

The following year, ALKAN purchases the remains of the bicycle Franck was riding when he was struck by a Paris streetcar. ALKAN attempts to have the bicycle installed in the organ loft at Ste. Clothilde, but is prevented by the Jesuits. He never again sets foot inside the Folies-Bergères.

ALKAN'S LOVE AFFAIRS

ALKAN has many love affairs, some scandalous, some less so.

(1) In 1827, when he is fourteen, George Sand carries him off to Majorca; but her children object and the roof leaks, so he does not remain.

(2) In 1878 comes his notorious affair with Mathilde Wesendonk. Under her influence he writes his *Variations sérieuses d'après le Barbier de Seville,* Opus 54, as well as making a good start on his *Tristan et Iseult: Grande Fantaisie et Gallop pour piano à quatre mains.* The latter, however, remains in an unfinished state—"a mighty torso," in the words of Sir George Grove.

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(3) Though Madame Wesendonk keeps him a virtual prisoner, he manages to make his escape disguised as the False Dimitri and elopes to Honduras with Humboldt's teen-age daughter. An avenue in Honduras is said to be named after her.[2] The affair is short-lived, however, and the next year finds ALKAN once again in Paris.

(4) Earlier he has maintained an establishment in an obscure suburb with two waiters from the Café Royale. César Franck is a frequent visitor and orgies are commonplace. It is reported that Franck composed his *Panis Angelicus* during one of these orgies. Such were his powers of concentration.

(5) ALKAN's last love affair takes place during his sixty-seventh year, after which he devotes himself exclusively to composition, except for infrequent Sunday dinners with his sister in the "Bois de Boulogne."

ALKAN AND COUNT WALSEGG ZU STUPPACH

Toward the end of his life, ALKAN is visited by the mysterious Count Walsegg zu Stuppach, a musical dilettante. Count Walsegg zu Stuppach commissions ALKAN to write a Latin Requiem, which he will then attempt to pass off as his own composition. Payment is to be in the form of a case of fine Cuban exploding cigars.

ALKAN passes to his reward before he can finish the Requiem, which is then completed by his barber, Schuppanzigh, a native of Seville. Seville is famed for the production of sherry by the "Salieri" process.

The manuscript of the Requiem remains unknown until it is discovered in 18— by Sir George Grove above a Chinese laundry in Soho. It receives its first performance in Leipzig by the *Gewandhausorchester* (Clothworkershouseorchestra), conducted by Felix Bartholdy. In rehearsal the orchestra proves recalcitrant because the musicians do not like to play "so many triplets," but the actual performance is a triumph owing to the personal intervention of Mad King Ludwig II of Bavaria.

ALKAN AND THE IRON CHANCELLOR

Some time after the Siege of Paris, ALKAN is invited to visit the Iron Chancellor at Sans Souci. During dinner the Iron Chancellor empties a bottle of claret (French beverage) over the tablecloth to set his guest at ease. After dinner he takes him on a tour of the palace. The palace has three hundred and sixty-five rooms, one for each day in the year according to the Gregorian Calendar then in use in Germany. In leap years, the Iron Chancellor spends the extra day at one of his other palaces. At Sans Souci there is a harpsichord in every room. The Iron Chancellor is a fan of harpsichord music. He has ALKAN play a sonata on each of the harpsichords. Many are out of tune but the Iron Chancellor is nevertheless enraptured. In the last room he whistles an air from *The Barber of Seville* and asks ALKAN to improvise a six-voice fugue on the melody. ALKAN sits down at the harpsichord and improvises his celebrated *Fugue romantique sur un thème d'après le Barbier de Seville.*

In the midst of the improvisation, a Field Marshal interrupts to inform the Iron Chancellor that war has broken out.

"Before you leave, Excellenz," ALKAN says, "have a cigar."

The Iron Chancellor selects a stogie from ALKAN's porte-cigare and tosses it to his dog, a purebred brindle Schweinehund. The Schweinehund bites the cigar in half and swallows one half. The other half explodes under its nose. The dog is so chagrined that it pees on the Field Marshal's dispatch case, which is standing nearby.

"Lek m'n Oasch, du Oasch med Uan (You must be one of these damned socialists)," the Iron Chancellor says, speaking in an upper-class Prussian accent so that the servants will not understand.

ALKAN quickly makes his escape disguised as the False Dimitri.

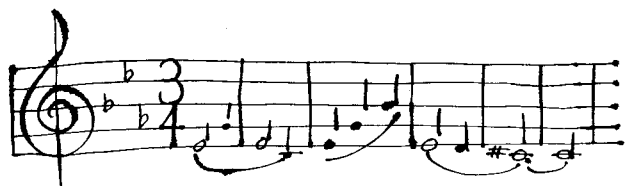
ALKAN'S SECOND VISIT TO RUSSIA

In middle life, ALKAN revisits Russia. By this time he is famous and is immediately invited to play at court, where he becomes infatuated with the Princess Stroganoff. Under her influence he composes *The Barber of Seville, une Grande Bagatelle Héroique pour piano à six mains.*[3]

It is firmly believed by the superstitious courtiers that the Princess Stroganoff is a descendant of Catherine the Great and the last of her favorites, the eponymous Cheval. Dobbin. The courtiers lose no time imparting this scandalous gossip to ALKAN. The latter, however, refuses to believe it, and the scurrilous tale merely serves to strengthen his infatuation. Eventually, however, he discovers the truth and escapes from Russia disguised as the False Dimitri.

[2]It was, nevertheless, rerouted during the troubles of 1926.

[3]Theme from *The Barber of Seville:*



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ALKAN AND GEORGE ELIOT

On February 19, 184–, ALKAN sends George Eliot, the mother of T. S. Eliot, President of Harvard from 1888 to 1965, a box of "El Reposo" cigars along with a note suggesting that they fly to Majorca together for the Easter holidays. At that time Majorca is almost the only place in Europe where a woman can get a good cigar.

On February 23 she returns the box to ALKAN, minus a single cigar which, in a note accompanying the rejected gift, she asserts blew up in her face when she attempted to light it.

These cigars are destroyed when ALKAN's bookcase topples over in 1888. It is not known that the accident caused any more of them to explode.

ALKAN AND THE "BAYREUTH FESTSPIELHAUS"

Between 187– and 188–, ALKAN is hard at work on his quasi-religious "Stage-Consecrating Festival Play," *Der Barbier von Sevilla.* It is a music-drama in three acts, lasting five and a half hours and employing an unprecedented number of Flower Maidens, but it remains unproduced until his protector, Sir George Grove, builds the "Bayreuth Festspielhaus" especially to stage it.

The elite of the Continent are on hand for the world premiere, including Mad King Ludwig II of Bavaria and the Countess Teresa Guiccioli, a musical dilettante.

ALKAN conducts from the keyboard. He is wearing white kid gloves and a long brown overcoat, formerly the property of Maillart, composer of *Gastibelza; ou, Le Barbier de Catane.* Catane is a suburb of Seville. During the first intermission he passes out cigars to the stagehands. Many in the audience are seen to be weeping.

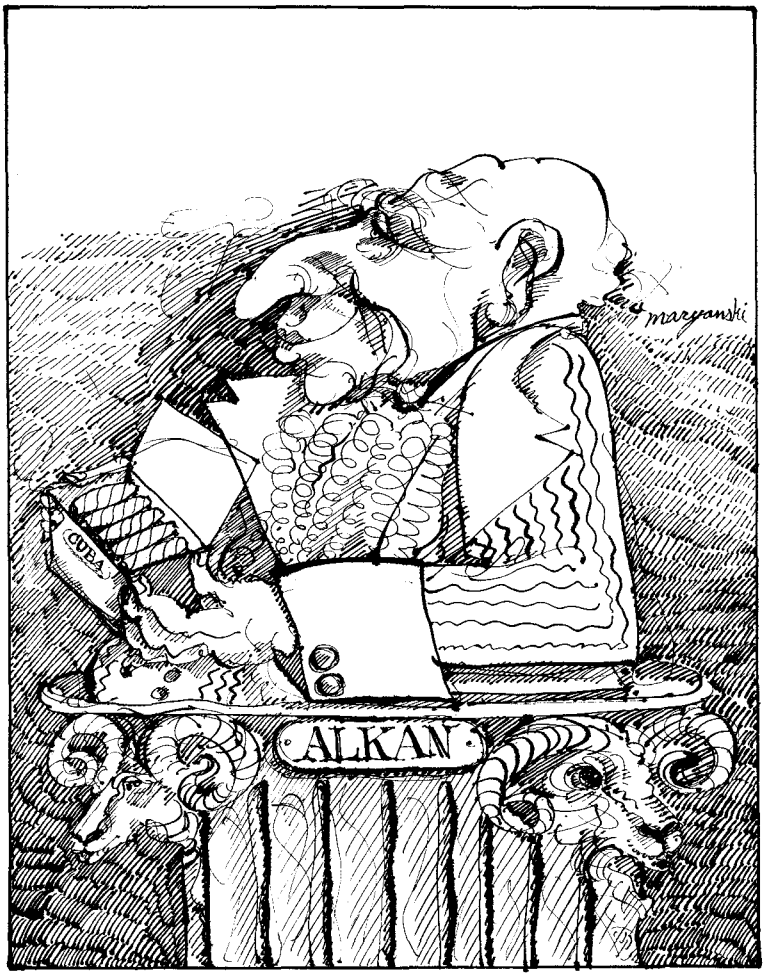
Sir George Grove's daughter, Cosima, soon becomes general manager of the "Bayreuth Festspielhaus" but during the war relinquishes control to her two grandsons, Weimar and Wotan.

The latter designs a new production for the Opera House in Tucson, Arizona, where it enjoys a *succès de scandale* (scandalous success). ALKAN, however, is not present, having previously passed to his reward.

Tucson, birthplace of the tuxedo (a garment favored by gold miners because of its warmth), is pronounced *TUCK-sahn.*

ALKAN'S CONTEMPORARIES

ALKAN has many contemporaries, amongst whom must be counted the Amir of Afghanistan,



Sir Edward Landseer, and—in America—the eponymous William Ellery Channing. It is Channing who supplies General Ulysses S. Grant with cigars during the War Between the States, leading President Abraham Lincoln to say, "Find out what kind of cigars Grant smokes so that I can send some to my other generals." It is thought that Lincoln believed that Grant's cigars were in some way responsible for his military successes. It should be noted in this connection that Princess Cantacuzene, General Grant's granddaughter, is also a contemporary of ALKAN's, for a brief time.

Though ALKAN rarely has the opportunity to visit America, he is known to speak frequently of Schuyler Colfax. Colfax, born in 18– in Seville, Indiana, is General Grant's barber. He is credited by some historians with being instrumental in persuading Grant, over official opposition, to install the first Victrola in the White House.

Unfortunately, ALKAN is born too late to have really known Kotzebue. Kotzebue is said to have discovered over three hundred and ninety-nine islands in the South Seas alone. □

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SHALL WE STRIP-MINE IOWA AND ILLINOIS TO AIR-CONDITION NEW YORK?

"Crisis" is always a word to use warily. By widespread agreement we are experiencing an "energy crisis." Is it real?

The United States, by some estimates, has only enough known oil reserves to last for ten years. We and other industrialized nations are using oil at an appalling pace. Between 1960 and 1967, worldwide consumption of petroleum equaled the amount consumed in the previous seventy years; it took three years to consume that much again.

And yet there is still no literal shortage of oil. The scarcities of the past year have been due to relative technicalities: import quotas, insufficient refining capacity. And the oil industry has been charged by some of its critics with manipulating the crisis for its own ends. We are more worried about dependence on the Arab oil-producing nations than about an absolute shortage. Furthermore, trends are not necessarily certainties. Throughout industrial history, the world has been depleting *known* reserves of fuel at alarming rates. New reserves have always been found and substitutes discovered. Technology has come to the rescue.

In the long run, of course, the fuels we now depend on must be depleted, and we must turn to self-renewing sources, such as solar energy or nuclear "breeder" reactors, whose prospects remain speculative and controversial. No one can say with confidence when the long run may begin.

It is conceivable that well before conventional fuel reserves run out, we may exhaust the ability of the environment to absorb the damage caused by extracting and using them. M. A. Adelman, an MIT economist who doubts the very existence of the energy crisis, has written: "Limits to growth must exist, and we may for all I know be close to them. . . . If one really believed that mineral resources were becoming increasingly scarce, there would be grounds for austere optimism. Pollution would of itself become increasingly difficult and expensive. Providence would have put a brake on the ability of mankind to poison itself. But there is no sign that we are being let off that easily."

Crises need not be real to have real results. One consequence of the uncertainty over petroleum supplies has been to quicken interest in strip-mining for coal. The United States is still well endowed with coal;

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present reserves might last five hundred years. But, more than any other fuel, coal extracts a price from the society that would extract it from the earth: large-scale destruction of the environment. It is a price we may have to pay.

"The choice we have to make," says Roger Revelle of Harvard's Center for Population Studies, "is whether to continue using large quantities of nonhuman energy, at the same time conserving it and using engineering and technical skills to reduce environmental damage, or to return to something like a slave state, perhaps at a much lower population level, in which some people would have a perfectly satisfactory environment, but most people would live lives of misery and despair."

The present rush for coal introduces us to a further conflict, one that goes beyond ordinary concerns for "the environment." We are an industrial society in need of energy, but we are also an agricultural society in need of food. In the western United States, coal beds lie beneath much of the richest farm and ranch land. In the following pages, Harry M. Caudill contemplates the awesome possibility that the demands of farming and mining cannot be reconciled. James Conaway visits a coal-rich region in Montana, whose residents view, with violently mixed emotions, the arrival of the bulldozers and draglines.

—THE EDITORS

FARMING AND MINING

There is no land to spare

by Harry M. Caudill

In the last decade, reams have been written about the "environmental crisis" that confronts our world. Our air and water are polluted, our vistas are turning hideous, and our swelling populations threaten the globe with the suffocation of sheer numbers. The Club of Rome has turned to computers and the printouts verify the grim warning that civilization will collapse within a century or so from a lack of natural resources.

The real and terrible dilemma lies in two irreconcilable imperatives. The first has to do with the ground—with the surface of the earth and farming, in the broadest meaning of the word. It lies in the inexorable requirement that the soil, the sun, and the rain combine to produce the food, fiber, and wood that feed, clothe, and shelter us. This imperative compels the topsoil to yield a flood of corn, wheat, barley, rye, rice, and potatoes. It must supply hay and green pasturage for cattle and hogs. And, if we are to avoid the leaden diet of seventeenth-century serfs, it must send out its crates of figs, grapes, apples, plums, pears, peaches, cherries, pomegranates, bananas, and melons. There must be millions of bales of cotton. We must have lumber and pulp, and the water upon and surrounding the earth must nurture cycles of fish, crabs, oysters, and clams, and quench the thirst of all life.

In short, the face of our planet must be preserved intact and healthy. But over-cropping and over-grazing have turned vast and once verdant districts into deserts or cactus-dotted wastes. Coastal Libya and central Arabia are prime examples of territories that men have ruined. The American Southwest is a region that men are in the act of killing. Nor does an abundance of land assure an abundance of food. The USSR and China are the world's largest countries and most of

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their people are peasants. But recent crop failures and famine have driven them to drastic alterations in their foreign policies and to postponement of long-coveted domestic improvements in order to buy grain from the American Midwest. More than 30 million tons of grain will have to be imported for human and livestock consumption. They are shipping carloads of gold bullion to Europe and are buttering up capitalist bankers for the dollars that will stave off starvation, unrest, rebellion, and revolution.

There is no land to spare. We need all we have and population pressures are driving nations to restore, as far as possible, the barren hills and mud-choked plains bequeathed by other eras. Around the world men plant trees on uplands and drain-silted lowlands, and they toil in a race against time.

Nor can we assume that new plant forms and methods of tillage will endlessly multiply production. The Soviet Union has tried them all, from cultivating virgin lands to hybrid seeds, but continues to shop for food thousands of miles from its own borders. Dr. Norman Borlaug, Nobel prize-winning scientist and father of the "Green Revolution," has told us what to expect: "Increased food supplies are a stop-gap, not a solution. Population growth transcends all other problems. Unless tamed, it will one day wipe us from the earth's surface."

The second imperative rests on the subsurface, the underground. It depends upon the substances that lie beneath the grainfields, stock ranges, and woodlands. It is embodied in the immense and fast-growing minerals industries.

Man learned to mine before he learned to farm. He pried a piece of sharp flint from an outcropping, tied it to a stick, and formed a spear. Thousands of years and countless sophistications later, there are nearly four billion living descendants of that ancient spearmaker, and they are in complete mastery of the world. His simple weapon has evolved into the ICBM tipped with a nuclear warhead—but modern man still lives by the same organs and impulses, and the planet in which he digs has not grown by a single yard. Through all the intervening years his skills at mining have enlarged and improved to keep pace with his numbers and his industrial appetites. But there are limits.

A glance at the changes that have come about in the world's productivity underscores the inevitability of the impending crisis. A Japanese petroleum study has disclosed that between 1890 (when the internal combustion engine was being perfected) and 1960 a cubic mile of petroleum was extracted from the earth's crust. During that period two world wars were fought and babies turned to crotchety graybeards. Then the modern industrial world really began to swing, and between 1960 and 1967 a second cubic mile of oil was consumed. The acceleration continued and in the next three years—1968-1970—a third cubic mile was disposed of. The inevitable projection brings the conclusion that before 1980 the world will require at least one cubic mile each year! And after that?

Steel production tells much the same story. In Mussolini's Italy, steel output was a mere 3 million tons yearly. But in 1970 Italy poured 17 million tons and Fiats blanketed the new autostradas. France confronted Hitler with a steel capacity of 6 million tons but now exceeds Nazi Germany's peak of 27 million. West Germany alone turns out about 65 million tons. The Soviet Union has increased its steel capacity from a 1941 level of 21 million tons to more than a hundred million. The United States has almost doubled its pre-Pearl Harbor pourings of 67 million tons. China's production has risen from a trifling 100,000 tons under Chiang Kai-shek to 16 million tons under Mao. And Japan, which sought to wrest the Pacific from the United States and Britain with mills rated at 7 million tons, can turn out twelve times as much. Nor is this all, for scores of countries that imported every nail and screw twenty years ago now look to towering furnace stacks in cities that tourist brochures have always described as "quaint," "medieval," or "charming." The quaintness and charm dissolve as the new symbols of power come on the line in Vietnam, Egypt, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, and Uruguay.

The building of steel mills sets off giant ripples like a boulder dropped in a lake. The furnaces require iron ore, limestone, coal, coke, and alloying ores, which some must mine and others must transport. The resulting ingots must be pounded and rolled into bars and sheets, and thence into finished products. Wages paid to workmen and dividends returned to investors translate into demands for consumer goods, which in turn require the building of more mills. The cycle is self-perpetuating and interminable, and is repeated with copper, lead, zinc, gold, silver, and clay ad infinitum. All this would be infinitely sustainable if there were infinite mineral fields and infinite farmlands but, alas, there are neither.

In fact, some highly industrialized countries are critically short of both croplands and mineral deposits. Italy is practically without coal and except for mercury its metal resources are infinitesimal. It has no shortage of vegetables and fruits but imports flour and meat from North America and the Argentine. Japan possesses little more coal than Pike County, Kentucky, but grinds out nearly as much steel as the fifty states. Its air is so grossly

Harry M. Caudill, author of *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*, practices law in Kentucky.

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polluted from coal and oil residues that it plans to build ninety nuclear power plants—with U.S. mines providing the uranium fuel.

Other countries once rich in almost all minerals—the United States is the prime example—find many of their stocks running low and must reach out to Libya, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela for oil and to Chile and Bolivia for copper and tin.

Indeed, as more and more countries demand more and more raw materials for more and more factories to supply goods to more and more people, the search for everything becomes frenetic. Russia hastily buys wheat from the United States, which in turn pushes a deal to buy Russian oil and gas. A worldwide scramble is imminent, a scramble from which no one is likely ever again to emerge with enough. Already, in its earliest stages, it has triggered a permanent global monetary inflation that threatens social and economic stability in all countries.

The scramble for resources to sustain the flowering of industrial man coincides with a revolution in the technology of mining. Before World War II, the almost universal method of "recovering" deep, solid-state minerals was by tunneling. An outcropping was found and men dug into it; then lateral tunnels were dug to right and left of the

Above: Strip-mining in progress in southeastern Ohio. Right: Wheeling Creek in southeastern Ohio, a stream polluted by mine acids from coal-mining. The water empties into the Ohio River.

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"main heading," with still others cutting up the resulting "pillars." Sometimes deep "shafts" or vertical tunnels had to be dug from a plain or valley floor down to the mineral. Deep-mining techniques and tools have made such operations incredibly complex, culminating in Russia in a coal mine 4500 feet beneath the portal, and in a South African gold mine sunk to more than twice that depth. Such operations pile mountains of residues near the openings (in West Virginia alone, 14,000 acres have been covered by coal mine wastes), cause subsidence and surface fractures, disrupt and pollute water tables, and trigger calamitous floods. Of more importance, they are immensely expensive in money and human flesh. Cave-ins crush bones and kill men. Dust chokes lungs. Orphans, widows, and cripples have to be pensioned. Workmen require high wages and costly training.

Consequently, engineers turn to surface-mining. Most solid-state minerals lie much closer to the top than the Russian coal and the South African gold. War-spawned engines make it possible to dig them out from above by simply "stripping" away all the overlying rocks, dirt, trees, grass, and flowers. We have created surface-mining tools of unbelievable size, power, and effectiveness: gigantic bulldozers, power shovels and drills, huge but agile "high-lifts," trucks that carry sixty tons per load, and cheap explosives compounded of petroleum and fertilizer. No mountain, however thickly capped with sandstone or granite, is proof against the men who come for its vitals.

Consider "Big Muskie," one of Ohio's tourist attractions and the pride of Central Ohio Coal Company. It stands twenty stories high, lifts a boom 310 feet long operated by a five-inch steel cable, and scrapes away 325 tons of overburden per scoop. Such machines are turned to the digging of phosphate, potash, clays, sand and gravel, copper, iron bauxite, and zinc. Iron and copper pits turn into awesome man-made canyons. Mountains are taken apart layer by layer. Plains are plowed to shreds and reduced to formless chaos. But men stay topside, casualties are fewer and less severe than in the underground mines, and fuels and ores reach mills and factories at lower costs. There is much to be said in support of strip-mining.

But there is another and sinister side of the coin. The lands we shred for minerals also feed, clothe, and shelter us, and when we dig we shrink our farms.

The rapid erosion of national interests is turning the world into a single, highly fluid trading unit. We Americans demand Toyota and VW automobiles, Swiss timepieces, and Middle Eastern oil. In buying them we have piled up dollars in foreign banks—in countries with humming factories and few resources. So the dollars have come back to wrest raw materials from what an earlier generation could rightly call America the Beautiful.

Japanese lumber companies have bought our largest national forest, the Tongass in Alaska. A consortium of Japanese iron and steel companies is financing a string of huge coal operations in Virginia and Alabama. On a single day in 1970, more than 24,000 railroad cars of coal lay at Hampton Roads, Virginia, awaiting shipment to Europe and Japan. Spruce and pine for lumber and pulp, walnut for Italian furniture and Japanese pianos, hard maple for Japanese bowling alleys, wheat and corn for hungry Chinese and Russians—indeed, whatever the American land can provide—flow out to the ends of the world. Increasingly, we Americans rely on the genius of foreign manufacturers, and ransack hill and plain for fuel, fiber, wood, grain, and ore to pay the bill.

The November, 1972, issue of *Coal Age* magazine puts it all in perspective. The Japanese steel industry, reports geologist W. B. Beatty, dominates the outlook for the coal industry in the Rockies. By 1980 the "free world" will produce 750 million metric tons of steel, with Japan, then the world's biggest steelmaker, turning out 200 million of them. Most of the coal for this boom will come out of the "golden West" at a good profit to mining companies. If ranchers and farmers read *Coal Age,* they will perceive many Big Muskies in their future.

Half of Iowa is underlain by strippable coal, as is 40 percent of Illinois. This is the nation's breadbasket, without which there would be little beef and pork for ourselves and no grain surpluses for sale to an underfed world. And the coal undergirds a fair-sized chunk of Texas, a third of Oklahoma, broad districts in New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Utah, Montana, Wyoming, Washington, and the Dakotas. According to *Coal Age,* the world boom is to be fueled by the same lands that must feed China and the Soviet Union, the same lands that succored India with 11 million tons of grain six years ago.

No euphemisms, however numerous or skillfully employed, can obscure the inevitable impact of strip-mining, because stripping is a total assault upon the land. It uproots and destroys every plant and drives out every creature. Some flora and fauna may return but, initially at least, none escapes. The dozer and power shovel go to the bottom of the mineral vein. In Montana and Wyoming the overburden may be twenty-five feet thick and the coal may extend down in a solid black ledge from eighty to one hundred and fifty feet. Once the overburden is pushed aside, the coal is exposed and loosened by explosives. After the fuel has been lifted out and hauled away, a yawning void remains. If the overburden is shoved into the pit and spread out on the floor—and if seeds are sowed and take root—someone will own a field at the bottom of a man-made abyss.

And the owner will be a rancher or farmer.

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When the government opened the land for homesteading, it retained titles to the minerals in much of the land, and the Bureau of Land Management in the Interior Department has leased hundreds of thousands of acres for mining. The ranchers and farmers are seldom consulted until the machines are ready to rumble down onto their spreads. And if they resist, their "surface rights" can be condemned.

The best lands will go first. The coal is ubiquitous but strippers abhor overburden, so they will avoid the hills. Ranchers grow their hay on lowlands near the meandering streams and graze their cattle and sheep on the rugged, lightly watered backlands. On the hayfields the overburden is thin, the coal near the top. When the fields are stripped, ranches lose their viability because without hay livestock cannot be carried through the icy winters. When the hay is lost, the ranch is finished. In time, though, the rugged knobs and hills will be brought under "contour stripping," then "augering," and finally "top removal." Coal is life to a society hungering for heat and chemicals, and the ranches and farms will have no rest.

But not all the coal in the West will stoke Oriental steel mills. The world's mightiest electric power plant is already operating at Page, Arizona, blackening the continent's cleanest air with smoke plumes hundreds of miles long. Such plants, and much bigger ones, are planned for the northern states to "utilize" the coal of Wyoming and Montana. Federal agencies and private companies are cooperating in the planning of four gargantuan facilities, each of which will burn about twelve tons of strip-mined coal per minute. The cheap electricity will stimulate more building, more jobs and industry, more consumption. The power stations will get the fuel and four-fifths of the water. The ranchers and farmers, and the Indians on their reservations, like their forerunners in the Appalachians, will be shunted aside into dependency and poverty. The corporations that despoil them will earn profits in the tens of billions.

The United States contains about 40 percent of the world's coal reserves in about 15 percent of its land surface. Marble, limestone, talc, gneiss, graphamite, phosphate, potash, oil shale, sand, gravel, commercial clays, and a score of other minerals bring the strippable total to at least a third. The mineral maps will entice the diggers for generations as rich deposits play out and men turn to lesser veins. For example, Minnesota's Mesabi Range supplied the republic with iron for nearly a century. It lay in a mountainous ledge and the ore came from a limited but now thoroughly devastated region. But the Mesabi is used up and broad areas are consumed by taconite miners scooping up pellets that other generations scorned. There are thousands of square miles of iron ore in Texas in veins only a few feet thick and fifty or sixty feet down. Cattle graze there now but there will be no room for them when the dozers arrive.

Nor can the affluent migrants from the cities to their second homes in beautiful natural settings rest easy. The phosphate beds of Florida are vast and more than 300,000 acres have already been ravaged. In the ski country near Woodstock, Vermont, men core-drill for copper and plan giant "open pit" operations. Amid the indescribably ancient ecology of Appalachia, the dissecting machines roar night and day as coal-rich mountains come tumbling down so that the Tennessee Valley Authority, the slums, and the suburbs may have light and power. These doomed mountains are important sources of hard and soft woods and, as the annual flood of visitors to the Great Smokies attests, offer invaluable recreational potential to an increasingly urbanized and harried society. The range is being mined to death at the same time that falling water tables in a dozen Western states drive these states into a coalition to divert the "wasting" Yukon from the Arctic Ocean to the gulfs of California and Mexico.

Industrial man is the greatest geological calamity to hit the world since the melting of the ice sheets. Not even a long epoch without him would restore Earth to its pristine splendor. We are burning and rusting away too much, and scattering the rest in a global diffusion.

And what of restoration? Can wheat or white oak or towering spruce flourish where Big Muskie has held sway? The mining industries say they can make the land fruitful again, but there is little evidence to support their claims. In the last decade a spate of state laws has attempted to control stripping and require "reclamation" of affected lands. They compel mining firms to obtain permits, to file plans for returning sites to a quality acceptable to the regulatory agency, and to post a bond guaranteeing that the plans will be adhered to.

The laws have not worked, mainly because rehabilitation is impossible in most cases and is immensely costly everywhere. Then, too, the power of the mineral lobbies, when harnessed to their allies in steel, chemicals, oil, electric utilities, railways, and barge lines has proved too great for the states to cope with.

Great Britain requires the most thorough and comprehensive efforts to restore stripped lands to their original quality. The National Coal Board requires the land to be carefully surveyed, photographed, and topographically mapped. Buildings and forests are cleared away; then the topsoil is scraped off and preserved in grass-grown heaps. One by one the strata are lifted out and segregated. All nutrient-rich rocks are identified and set aside to be crushed and applied to the surface. After the coal has been hauled away, the layers go

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back into the pit in their natural order. Each is compacted with heavy rollers. The surface is sculptured to an approximation of its original shape; then the topsoil is spread over it. Grass is sowed and trees are brought from national forests and planted where others once grew. Then walls, roads, and houses are rebuilt. Restoration extends over five years and costs about $5000 an acre, but even these stringent measures leave the land sunken and maimed and the groundwater charged with enormous quantities of minerals.

Indeed, mineralization of water is an inescapable concomitant of surface-mining. Ages of wind and rain have leached topsoil so that when rain strikes it, the water remains sweet and soft. But the dozer blade shatters and exposes primal soils still heavy with scores of minerals, including sulfur, copperas, zinc, alumina, iron, copper, magnesium, manganese, and salt. Rain dissolves them and streams run foul and hard. Aquatic life disappears and householders and industrialists install water softeners and complain of the costs.

Dr. Wayne Davis of the University of Kentucky has written extensively about the deterioration of Kentucky River water since strippers went to work on its upper reaches. He reports that the U.S. Public Health Service sets the safe iron content level for human consumption at 0.3 parts per million. Before stripping got under way the stream was safe at 0.02 ppm. After a decade of surface-mining, the iron content rose to 8.88 ppm! The Public Health Service sets the tolerable manganese level at 0.05 ppm. Before mining began, no manganese was detected in the water, but it now runs at 74.4 ppm. The once soft-water stream became foul with similarly high concentrations of magnesium, calcium, sulfates, and sulfur.

Nor can such degradation of streams be avoided so long as men dig and minerals dissolve when wet.

In November, 1972, the Corps of Engineers admitted that the inevitable and clearly foreseeable fate had befallen four of its lakes on the Big Sandy River in the Kentucky and Virginia hills. Built at a cost of $83 million, one of the lakes was acknowledged to be "dead" from a tremendous buildup of minerals and the others were silting nine or ten times faster than had been anticipated when the projects were authorized by Congress. It is feared that another ten to twenty years will see mud reach the top of the dams. Thus immense sums of public money and much labor will have been wasted to create dismal, reeking swamps in once green valleys where hundreds of people had farms, schools, churches, cemeteries, plans, and hopes.

To date, only about three square miles have been strip-mined in the stupendous lignite fields of North Dakota, but the beds contain an estimated 351 billion tons and more than two million acres are already under lease to mining companies. Vast gasification and electric power plants are projected for the state's northwestern counties, and the farmers know that mining will prevent any profitable return to wheat and cattle. The subsoil is rich in sodium and, when brought to the surface, is virtually impermeable. Restoration of an acceptable plant cover would require treatment with phosphate fertilizer and sulfur, prolonged leaching, and the use of more water than the scant twelve-to-fifteen-inch rainfall will ever afford.

In 1967 the Interior Department sent a report to Congress detailing the pillage of the American land up to January 1, 1965. The magnificently illustrated document showed that until eight years ago 3,187,825 acres had been churned to wasteland by surface miners—an area almost as large as Connecticut. Since then the roaring machines have had little rest, and our backlog of stripped-out earth has doubled to the equivalent of two Connecticuts. At present, stripping consumes 4650 acres a week, and by the end of the century, a Pennsylvania will have been plundered, and perhaps a Virginia as well. Even if atomic and solar power displace fossil fuels, burgeoning chemical plants will take up much of the slack. And prudent recycling and the mining of our city dumps will still leave fantastic demands for new pourings of glass, aluminum, iron, and other metals. All will have to be dragged up out of the earth. There is no other source.

Because we must dig, we must, in the next generation or two, face such questions as these:

Shall Britain's most popular national park, Snowdonia, be subjected to open-cast mining for copper, zinc, tin, and lead? The minerals are there in abundance beneath the hiking trails and the beautiful vistas. Which shall be sacrificed?

The same people who will revel in the pleasures of sand and sea will clamor for gasoline and masonry. Shall the crowded resort beaches of the world be studded with drilling rigs and pitted by sand and gravel dredges?

Shall the nations open their national forests and wildlife preserves to the draglines, bulldozers, and the mining wheel? Shall lions, alligators, and mere human wood users and nature lovers hold in abeyance industrial man's lust for fuel and ores?

How long can man persist without the mineral riches of Earth's last virgin continent, and how could he survive the consequences of mining them? Shall men melt the Antarctic ice cap and drown scores of cities and many coastal plains to reach the coal, oil, gas, iron ore, and other resources shielded by the age-old glaciers?

Countless times it has been asked, "How shall we make peace with ourselves?" Now survival requires that we find an answer to that question and to another: "How shall we make peace with our world?" □

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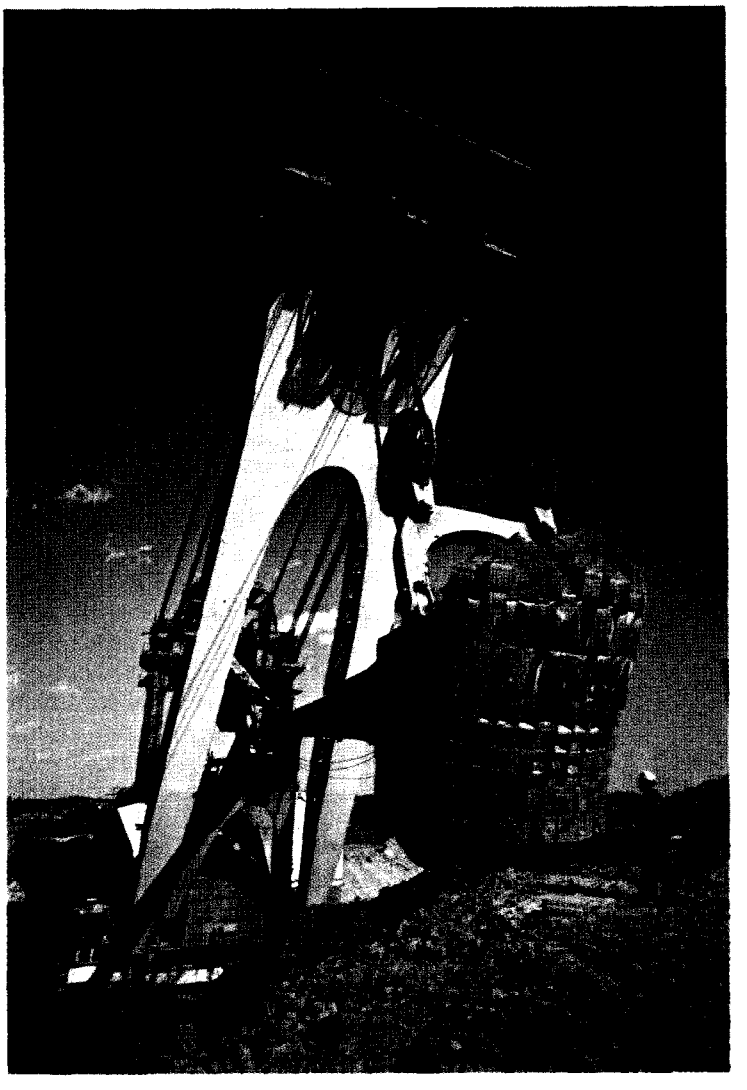
THE LAST OF THE WEST: HELL, STRIP IT!

by James Conaway

Saturday night begins early in eastern Montana. People living in Rosebud County may have to drive fifty miles to hear the Cridland Trio play at the Oak Room in Forsyth, and that means getting boots shined and the pickup on the road by seven. The bright lights outlining the cross on the hill above Forsyth blink on at dusk. The town has only 1800 inhabitants, but it supports seven bars, most of them in the three-block commercial strip between the Farmers Union silo and the Howdy Hotel. The Burlington & Northern railway line splits Forsyth like a zipper, and in early spring dust devils dance on the siding. A tourist riding in an observation car at the tail end of a train shuttling from Chicago, a thousand miles back, to the West Coast, almost that far into the future, might glance up from his dated Minneapolis newspaper, or his laminated menu, and wonder just exactly where he is.

Around the turn of the century Forsyth won a struggle with nearby Rosebud to determine which town would be the county seat. Since then Rosebud has wilted, and Forsyth has endured, although the citizens of both would argue with those terms. Forsyth has a bank, two car dealerships, another for Yamaha motorcycles, a library, an American Legion post, and three eating establishments—the Tastee Freeze, the Speedway Diner, and the Joseph Café. The lobby of the Joseph Hotel serves as the newsstand, the pinball parlor, and the Greyhound depot. Here a cowboy can buy his ticket to Miles City or to Billings, and a copy of the Forsyth *Independent.* A front-page column called "Jensen's Jottings and Delectations" begins: "By dogies! Them was tough days, those days of Forsyth in the '70s. Me and the boys was whooping it up in one of the bars in town when in walks the tall dark stranger." Old men in plaid shirts and string ties sit in sway-backed chairs, their boots resting in grooves worn through the tiles and a quarter-inch of floorboards. They gaze out at the street and the tracks, and the sudden frontier darkness.

Around the corner in the Oak Room two cowboys stand at the bar, solemn as wooden Indians. Both of them have rhinestone snaps on their dress shirts, brushed stetsons, hand-tooled belts, pressed



Right: The Gem of Egypt, a giant earth-moving machine, which weighs 7000 tons and has a 125-cubic-yard bucket capable of scooping 200 tons of earth at one bite.

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Farah trousers, and boots with wing tips in real lizard skin. The one in the lime-green shirt tells the bartender, "Give us two double gins with grapefruit juice and a teaspoon of sugar," waits until the drinks are mixed, and adds, "in paper cups." As he and his partner saunter out, he says over his shoulder, "We're going to *Sheridan,*" where the rodeo is being held, a hundred miles to the south.

"They're going to get their horns scraped," observes the bartender.

The Cridland Trio arrives without fanfare, begins to unpack the gear with the efficiency of men who work with their hands during the day and play Country and Western at night. Couples move across the bare floor to the tables with the best view; they order their favorite drinks to the twang of warming strings—sloe gin and orange juice, V.O. and Squirt, "Ditch"—bourbon and water in Montana—and innumerable Pink Squirrels. The Cridland Trio opens up with the nasal joy of "Jeremiah Was a Bullfrog," and the floor immediately fills. These people have come to the Oak Room to dance, and that doesn't mean sitting around waiting for the mood to arrive.

Forsyth remains a part of what many people still think of as "the West." Posters in the shop windows announce Montana Jack's and Tonto's time at stud; men still fight as often for recreation as for anger. Many judges look more kindly upon homicide than cattle rustling ("If you can't divorce your wife in Nevada," the saying goes, "bring her to Montana and shoot her"), but at the same time, "If you're a halfway decent fellow, you'll have more friends out here than you know what to do with."

Forsyth and a hundred other little towns in eastern Montana, northern Wyoming, and the western Dakotas expect to boom. They rest on one of the largest coal deposits in the world, thirty-four billion tons of low-sulfur fuel—subbituminous coal and lignite—which represents more than a third of this country's remaining coal reserves that can be blasted, gouged, and scraped from the earth without the expense of shaft-mining. Strip-mining has already begun in eastern Montana, and what can stop it? The coal is being shipped by rail to private utilities that still urge people to live better electrically (less than a year ago the Montana Power Company offered incentives to those who bought new television sets), and soon it will be fed into electric-generating, and then coal gasification and liquification, plants located at the mines, to supply energy for Omaha, Chicago, and maybe Manhattan.

James Conaway has written reports from Memphis and El Paso for *The Atlantic.* Hs is the author of *Judge,* a forthcoming biography of the Louisiana politician Leander Perez.

The people of Forsyth have no desire to fuel air conditioners across the nation at the expense of their land and their way of life. They don't particularly like the strangers brought in to build the steam plant for Montana Power located thirty-five miles south at Colstrip—"You can't trust these new people," said a local carpenter, "you get in a fight with one of them, and he goes off and presses charges." And they are bothered by the thousands of acre-feet of water that will run from the Yellowstone to the plant. But they do like the idea of new jobs, and the prosperity the coal companies say industrialization will bring.

The fact is that Forsyth isn't likely to experience flush times. A strip mine that produces millions of tons of coal a year can be operated by two dozen men, and most of them aren't going to be hired out of the Oak Room, but brought in from mines operated in the East by the same companies now holding leases to hundreds of thousands of acres in the area. The generating plants will be built by construction crews made up largely of outsiders; the companies will construct their own trailer courts and shopping centers. A national food chain will undoubtedly open a supermarket in Forsyth, a second bank with outside interests will appear, the Chevy dealership will be taken over by some aggressive Minnesotan. Gas stations will proliferate, and the sun will rise and set blood red through air that was once the cleanest in the United States. Then after two or three decades the coal will be gone, and so will the basis for the new economy. Productive space for pasture and farming will be severely limited. Forsyth will have lost that ingenuousness that is essentially "Western," and it will also have lost its present sense of community. There will be more inhabitants and more bars, but there will also be real poverty and a view in the surrounding countryside of mined land—albeit "reclaimed"—the extent of which now defies imagination.

The presence of the coal is no recent discovery. Meriwether Lewis observed on April 22, 1805, that some lumps of coal he collected "burnt tolerably well [and] afforded but little flame or smoke, but produced a hot & lasting fire." For a century ranchers and homesteaders and their descendants have been gathering coal from the bottoms of the "coulees"—shallow meandering streams—for their personal use. A few shaft mines operated over the years, and the Northern Pacific railroad strip-mined at Colstrip between 1923 and 1958 to fuel its engines, but large-scale development was never considered until the North Central Power Study (NCPS) appeared in 1971. This two-volume tome was produced by the Bureau of Reclamation—an Orwellian term describing an office within the Department of the Interior whose effectiveness is sometimes measured by the amount of land it destroys—and financed by the power and mineral

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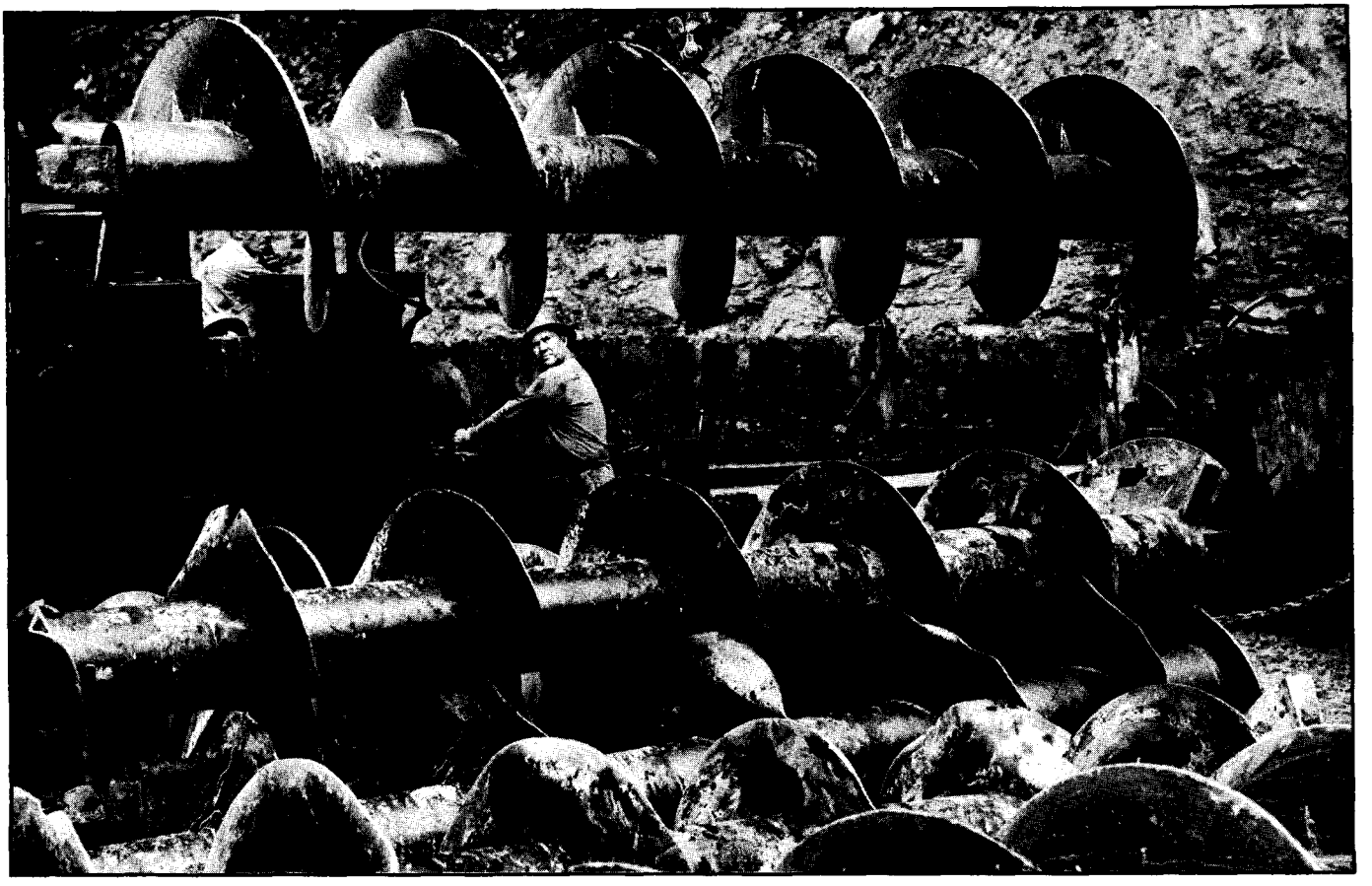


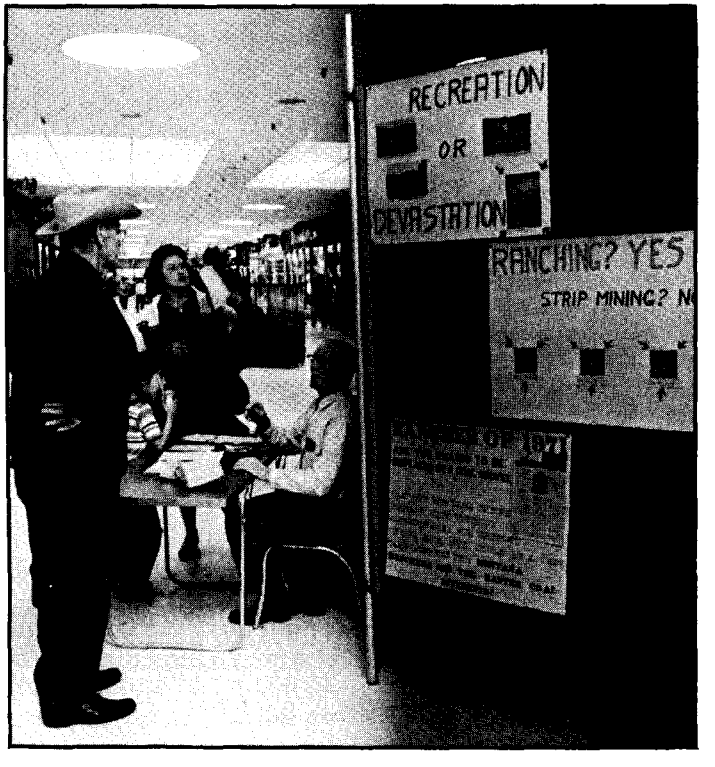
conglomerates which own most of the big coal companies.

There are two concepts of "reclamation." One refers to the deriving of usable materials from a waste product. That is the Bureau's definition. The other concept—and the one relevant to discussion of coal-mining—involves returning the land to some semblance of its former condition, and one that will support some type of agriculture after the coal has been stripped.

The NCPS asserted, among other things, that the demand for power in this country must double every ten years. It called for the construction of forty-two mammoth coal-burning power plants—half of them located in Powder River, Rosebud, and Big Horn counties in Montana—a complex that would dwarf the plants at Four Corners, New Mexico, one of the major stationary sources of pollution in the world. The study also advocated the creation of dams, reservoirs, and aqueducts to store most of the available water in the area for the power plants, the construction of thousands of miles of transmission lines, and the consumption of more than two million tons of coal a year, thereby causing more air pollution than that of any two cities combined.

Dipping south from Forsyth, Highway 315 passes through rolling prairie of extreme and fragile beauty. The meaning of the phrase "Big Sky country" becomes clear: sweeping vistas that carry the eye and the mind beyond expectation; the dark ridges fringed with ponderosa pine; the high

Above: Augur drills used in stripping hillsides of coal. Below: Montana ranchers formed the Bull Mountain Landowners Association in an effort to stop strip-mining in the cattle-raising country.



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pinkish "burns" where thousands of years ago smoldering coal seams produced clinker piles too hard to erode; the texture of a dozen different natural grasses mixed with sagebrush and greasewood; sandstone tors, clefts, and valleys that provide essential shelter to cattle when the winter wind blows unhampered straight down from the Arctic Circle. The land also supports antelope and whitetail deer, pheasant, quail, sharptailed grouse, turkey, and even bluebirds, and every year is overrun by armed "dudes"—the collective term for outsiders sporting beneath the Big Sky—who enjoy some of the finest hunting in the United States.

The look of the land has changed remarkably little in the last century, with the exception of the area around Colstrip. Here the horizon takes on a crazy aspect, with banks of shale, sand, and raw minerals stacked together like gigantic loaves of soggy gray bread, or marshaled in sharp, serrated rows. These dead spoils left from the Northern Pacific's early strip-mining are miles away, but they seem to crowd the highway, the little company town of Colstrip built in their shadow, the sky itself. The Burlington & Northern—Northern Pacific's descendant—is pushing over these spoils in a grand public relations gesture, so that when the railroad begins to mine its own coal again the environmentalists will have nothing but innocuous lunar flats to object to.

The railroads, the U.S. government, and the Cheyenne and Crow Indians own almost all the coal in the area. The Burlington & Northern's planting of exotic shrubs and grasses on five hundred acres at Colstrip seems a modest effort when one considers that the railroad owns more than 2.3 million acres, and the mineral rights to an additional 6 million acres. The railroad is in the enviable position of being able to mine its own coal, or lease it to other companies to be mined, and then to charge what the traffic will bear to ship the coal to private utilities across the nation. Ten special acres at Colstrip have been intensely cultivated by Western Energy, Montana Power's subsidiary now mining Burlington & Northern coal, and have been seeded and transplanted with enough fertilizer, according to ranchers in the neighborhood, to grow grass on a tin roof. It is this plot that the industry continually presents as "proof" that all the land can be reclaimed.

Actually, no one knows if the land can be reclaimed. The establishment of a permanent grass cover in the area, even under the best conditions, can take years. The topsoil is often no more than a few inches thick, the rainfall scarce, and the balance between productive range land and desert precarious. Strip-miners are now required by law to preserve the topsoil, but stockpiles are subject to waste, and wind and water erosion, and it is expensive and difficult to return the stockpiles as proper spoil cover. Strip-mining not only traumatizes the surface of the land, but it disrupts ground water, and severs the deeper aquifers that transmit water for many miles.

At the most recent session of the state legislature in Helena, an effort to halt strip-mining in Montana until the proper amount of research could be done was defeated (a higher severance tax and a stiffer reclamation law were passed). One of the lawyers representing the coal companies said in defense of continued strip-mining, "We know the land can be restored. We just don't know how to do it yet."

Across Highway 315 lies Peabody Coal Company's Big Sky mine. Peabody is owned by Kennecott Copper and controls approximately one-third of the coal leases in Montana and North Dakota. Other companies operating in the area that in the last few years have amassed land leases by various means, and are engaged in or about to begin strip-mining, are Westmoreland Resources, a conglomerate of coal and energy companies which includes the construction firm of Morrison-Knudson; Ayrshire Coal (Gulf Oil); Consolidation Coal (Continental Oil); and Decker Coal Company, owned by the Peter Kiewit Construction Company. Chevron, Shell, Amax, and other companies also hold extensive leases, and are acquiring more.

Big Sky is a vest-pocket mine compared to the operations on Peabody's big Western board, for Big Sky produces a mere 4 million tons of coal a year for Minnesota Power & Light, and disturbs only 122 acres yearly. The mine is a good showpiece for the company because it is set among burns and canyon walls not yet overpowered by disruption. Topsoil covering the first 300 acres mined when Big Sky opened in 1969 was lost because Peabody wasn't required to save it, but since then it has been stockpiled, and big Number 8 Caterpillars can easily be called out to push around tons of topsoil in reclamation "demonstrations" for visitors.

Peabody's slogan—"Progress Through Power"—is printed on the bright steel wall of the main office. Men in the adjoining workshop seem diminished by their tools—wrenches with four-foot handles, steel nuts the size of cantaloupes—and a welder kneels inside the dragline scoop the size of a room. Engineers and their apprentices in hard-hats move between the main office and their pickups with an air of hale efficiency ("I've got forty thousand drill holes to dig. That's what you call job security"). Miners are loyal company men, and more often than not embody the prevailing and antagonistic emotions that characterize development of the West: romanticism and an eagerness to exploit. "God, I love the wild country," says a pit superintendent, who became a mining engineer because "I had this idea of the solitary miner with his pick and his burro, making his way through the wilderness, with nobody to bother him."

But a mineral lurking beneath the surface is an

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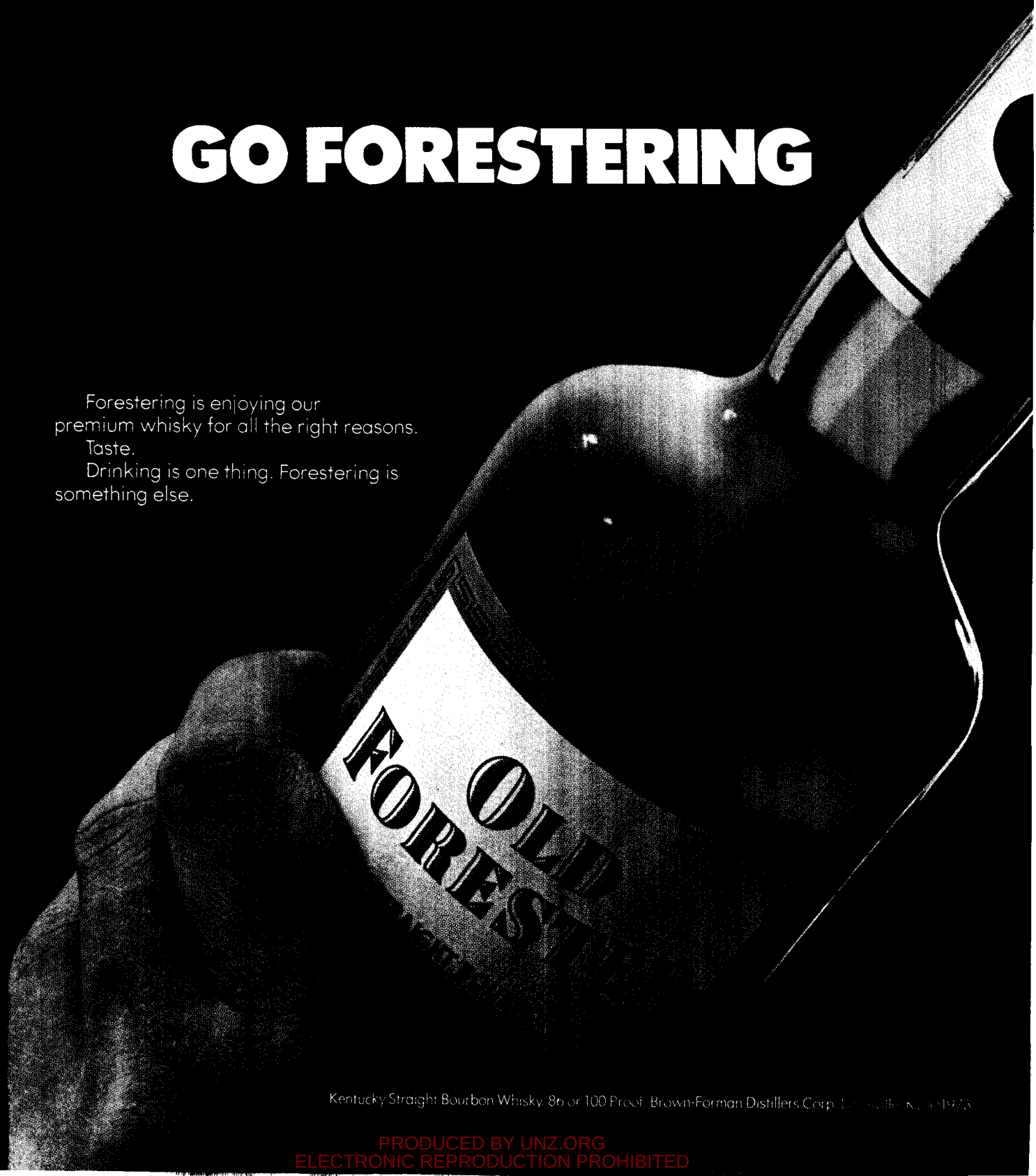

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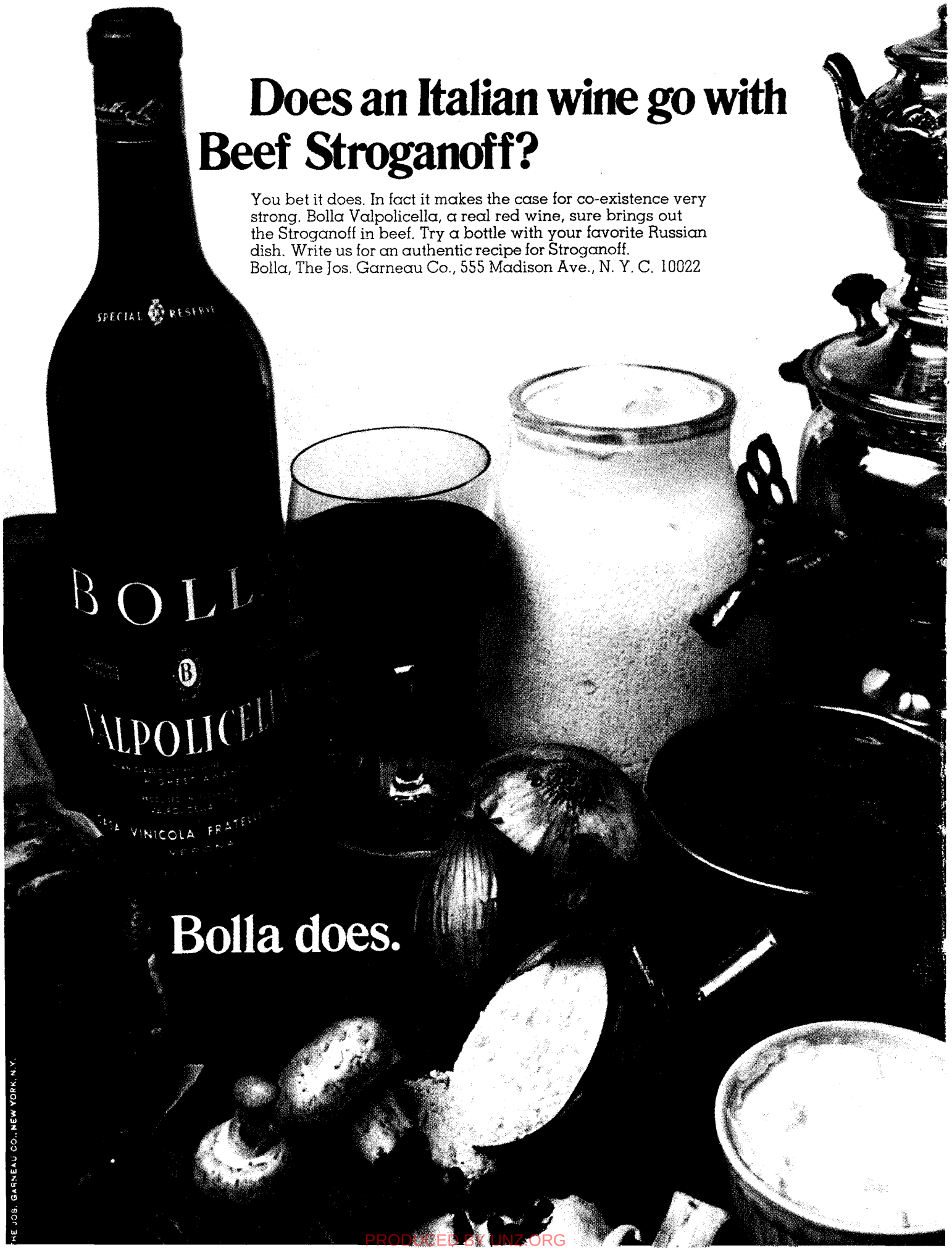

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insult and a test. "The good Lord put the coal there, and it's up to us to get it out." A curious blend of the Protestant ethic and the wrath of the Maccabees. All those seams of carbonized vegetable matter are somehow rooted in hell, and happen also to be a source of industry and not a little money. Any honest mining engineer will admit that gaping holes in the earth are beautiful to him. The most common defense of strip-mining among those in the industry is: "But there wasn't anything there before we started digging!"

The initial claim of companies developing the coal in eastern Montana was that the land lacked intrinsic value, and wasn't worth saving. This reasoning has already led to the destruction of land in Appalachia and many other parts of the United States, and has caused anger and bitterness among those who might have favored some coal development. The coal companies promptly reversed themselves, insisting that they could and would restore the land, making it "even better than before," a bit of expediency most people haven't forgotten.

Big Sky is the headquarters of Gene Tuma, director of conservation for Peabody's Western Division, which includes the mine at Black Mesa, Arizona, that provides coal for the giant Four Corners complex. Tuma might be described as a "new" Montanan. He wears cowboy boots to work, but his allegiance is to a company with roots firmly established east of the Mississippi. Tuma is the new mayor of Forsyth ("Somebody had to take the reins"), a town he describes as "provincial." He disapproves of Montana's new increased severance tax on coal, and describes those opposed to strip-mining in the state as "radicals." These include the editor of the Billings *Gazette,* Doc Bowler, who has written editorials calling for the orderly development of coal, higher taxes for coal shipped out of the state, and a ban on power and gasification plants that pollute the air and water ("Oh, we're sons of bitches, all right," says Bowler, with the nervous laugh of a man who has taken on the world's biggest corporations, and suspects that he is losing). Tuma's tour includes views of artificial ponds, bulldozed at the base of spoils, which resemble gravel pits; seedlings of trees; bushes and grass planted in a few designated areas mostly by students working on weekends; a solitary cottonwood tree in a sea of sand and shale: "It's a terrible temptation for a cat-skinner to knock down every tree he comes to," chuckles Tuma. And the mine itself.

Strip-mining is a simple process, and particularly easy in this part of the West. There are no real mountains to contend with, and the overburden—a pejorative describing all that lies between the miner and his coal—is shallow, sometimes no more than a few feet. The topsoil is scraped away, then the miners "shoot" the overburden by drilling holes every twenty-four square feet, filling them with monium nitrate soaked in diesel fuel, and touching the charges off simultaneously. This disrupts acres at a time, and the overburden can be scraped away by the dragline and piled next to the cut. When the seam is exposed, it too is shot, and the coal is scooped up by a shovel and transported by truck to the railroad siding.

The dragline is a crane mounted on a circular drum, with a towering boom and a two-inch cable that hauls up the loaded scoop and swings it to the side. Big Sky's dragline holds only fourteen cubic yards of overburden—about 14 tons—and is capable of transporting this amount every minute. That means the dragline can move 500,000 tons of overburden a month, and it is only a scale model when compared to the 150-cubic-yard draglines Peabody operates in the East. Dragline operators are held in high esteem because their equipment is the biggest at the mine. Some men have even been known to wear white shirts to work. They sit in a glass-enclosed, air-conditioned cab, with a view much like that from the prow of a ship, as it plows through a trough of blue-gray Arnold shale.

One of the dragline operators at Big Sky is a heavyset native of Illinois named Ed Sopher. Every morning Sopher wakes up to a vista of low mountains rose-colored in the sun, a broad plain that was once the floor of a warm lapping sea and now is spread with grass and sagebrush, and in the distance the angular thrust of Peabody's loading bin above the Burlington & Northern's crescent-shaped spur line. His trailer is one of a dozen set among pine and cedar in Ambrose Heights, an isolated ridge off the highway. Sopher was one of the original settlers of Ambrose Heights and serves on the board of the local nondenominational church. His children attend the Colstrip school, and he and his wife, Mary, plan to stay where they are until the Big Sky mine is worked out. Probably Ambrose Heights and the two hundred feet of overburden and coal upon which it rests will be considerably altered by the year 2000, but then there will be plenty of flat space for trailers in eastern Montana.

Sopher and Mary came West in 1969. The trailer cost them $10,000, and they pay $50 a month rent for the view, quality neighbors—"There's no trash living here"—and the proximity to Big Sky. They both say they love Montana. The distant thunder of the coal trucks shuttling between the shovel and the bin bothers Mary, as does the shooting of overburden and coal seams, which rattles dishes and has broken windows elsewhere, but the clear, dry air compensates for these inconveniences.

The Sophers are a mining family, and Ed sometimes speaks of "the romance of mining." They are accustomed to the proximity of giant earth-moving

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operations. Ed's father was a miner, and he was born within sight of the biggest coal shovel in southern Illinois. After leaving high school, Ed went to work driving a truck like those that stir up long plumes of dust on Big Sky's horizon. He graduated to the status of cat-skinner, then dragline operator, and worked seven days a week until his children were out of grammar school. He heard that Peabody, his employer, was opening a mine in Montana, and decided to head West, although "we had roots down to the floor, and the house paid off."

Now Sopher works only six days a week, and is paid $6.39 an hour, plus time and a half on Saturday. He finishes work at 4:00 in the afternoon, and by 4:15 he is usually sitting in his brocade easy chair in front of the color television, the little plastic canister containing his earplugs still attached to his belt.

He is thirty-six but he looks older. He is partially deaf. Coal companies were only recently required by law to provide the earplugs, although Sopher would never blame Peabody for his deafness: "There's only eighty-five decibels inside the dragline cab." He is sensitive to criticism of the coal companies and of miners. The concerns of ranchers and environmentalists—"eagle freaks," as they are sometimes called—annoy Sopher.

"Other people sometimes think of us as a low grade of citizen, but miners are a real part of the community. We're little people helping the nation. Soon we'll be going to gasification out here, and that means we'll be helping to provide more electricity for everybody. I'm a good American. I worked for nothing helping to build recreation facilities on the old spoils back in Illinois, and the company was good enough to provide the equipment. I got to see people coming down to enjoy the ponds and things we built, and that was my pay."

The Sophers and their children have developed an affection for the spaciousness of the West. Mary Sopher is concerned about the influx of people that coal development will bring, and about air pollution from the generating plant. Ed claims that the tripling of Colstrip's present population (six hundred) in the next three years will be "no problem," but this assertion lacks conviction. "We used to pass only two or three cars when we drove up to Forsyth," Mary says regretfully. "Now we pass fifty."

Sopher steps to the window of his trailer, and gazes out across miles of untouched range. The expression of longing on his face is at odds with his words: "Mining is the best thing that could happen to eastern Montana. It's just a desert, anyway. Hell, strip it."

In 1969, according to an article in the *Pittsburgh Press,* a vice president of Consolidation Coal Company, James D. Reilly, described conservationists and others who wanted reclamation of strip-mined land as "stupid idiots, socialists and Commies who don't know what they are talking about. I think it is our bounden duty to knock them down and subject them to the ridicule they deserve."

That statement represents a fair approximation of the coal industry's attitude today, though it is no longer admitted. The year 1969 is far removed from 1973 in terms of revealed political power of conservationists and the cost—always the prime consideration—to those who must comply with new laws. The coal industry was forced to recognize public demand for responsible mining and land restoration, and recognition came early this spring in the form of the Research and Applied Technology Symposium on Mined Land Reclamation.

The symposium in Pittsburgh was billed as "the birth of the new science of land reclamation." Mining engineers, sales representatives, and government employees are accustomed to congregating in the nation's starker corners, and the men who got out of the elevators on the top floor of the William Penn Hotel were prepared to suffer. Purveyors of heavy equipment drifted like barracudas among the coal company officials, the loneliest ones with blueprints in their pockets for hybrid dozers that could only be used for reclamation. The star attractions were professors who were friends of an industry that supplies limited funds for research, and for travel and recreation.

"I think we're on the recession end of this ecology binge," remarked a professor in the department of resource management at the University of Arizona, discussing the effect of pollution at Black Mesa. "I've always thought money was behind these environmentalists. Money's behind the Indians' demands, if I know anything about Indians."

"The smoke doesn't bother anything but the Indians and a few sheep," added a Peabody agronomist charged with growing grass on the spoils. "I mean, there's nobody *there,* practically speaking."

The hotel was overheated, which added to the grim reality of sitting and confronting the truths of "Improved Reclamation Potential with the Block Method of Contour Stripping" and "Applications of Aerial Remote Sensing of the Study of Mined Lands." The president of the National Coal Association, Carl Bagge, held a brief television interview in the foyer outside the hall. When a reporter for WTAE respectfully asked if Bagge could explain the block-cut method of contour stripping, Bagge admitted with a smile that he could not. (The method prevents the dumping of overburden down mountainsides, and if it had been used in Appalachia would have prevented the destruction of thousands of acres of timber and the conversion of streams and rivers into sulfuric acid.) Posing for a photograph with the interviewer, Bagge jokingly said, "You've got to believe what we're doing is in the public interest, kid. We've got to get that coal!"

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During the session on Preplanning and Mine Operating Procedures, a professor of forestry from the University of British Columbia stood up and bravely told the five hundred industry representatives that the symposium was concerned only with techniques of reclamation, and "the real philosophical commitment is lacking." The professor had everything against him: he wore a goatee, he spoke with a Scottish accent, and displayed a rose in his buttonhole. A red rose. When he said that the industry was only involved in reclamation "because it is being forced to do so by public opinion—there is no real respect for landscape itself," the director of surface-mining reclamation for Pennsylvania growled, "Who is this garbage collector?" and stalked out of the hall. He stood in the foyer, cursing loudly, and was joined by a steady stream of sympathizers until the clamor made it difficult for the speaker to continue.

An air of corporate inviolability hung about the head table at lunch. E. R. Phelps, president of Peabody, was deeply tanned; Bagge casually smoothed his white silk tie as he spoke of the "neglect, and hostile neglect" the coal industry had suffered in the past, before the recent renewed interest in coal. He borrowed the environmentalists' cliché of the earth as a spaceship, and he said, "We in the industry make the difference between first-class accommodation on that spaceship, and steerage."

That evening when everyone gathered in the Fort Duquesne Room to drink whiskey and eat hard cheese on saltines, Bagge and his peers were conspicuously absent. The crisp young woman handling public relations explained: "Oh, they're attending a board meeting in Boca Raton."

The cost of reclamation that the coal industry resisted for so long, and still resists, amounts to about one cent on the price of each ton of mined coal. Reclamation efforts being carried out on the Burlington & Northern spoils cost $600 an acre, but that figure could be reduced by more efficient mining operations—particularly the immediate refilling of mined areas, without stockpiling topsoil. The almost incredible fact concerning this area is that all research, and most of the actual planting and seeding, is being done by one man, Richard Hodder, a research associate of the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station of Montana State University. Hodder covers eastern Montana, trying to convince the coal companies of the value of effective reclamation and a productive if monotonous and artificial landscape.

"The companies are buying up everybody they can get," says Hodder, "but they're buying the wrong types: mining engineers, geologists, and agronomists who are used to growing grass under optimum conditions, and not on the junk mines produce. That's why we're getting all these oddball statements about what can be accomplished. Also, it takes imagination to form a new landscape, to envision what's going to be there in the future. These people have no idea what they're doing."

He believes that the land can eventually be reclaimed, but admits that no one knows if the spoils will even hold water. He foresees a "flattened effect" in eastern Montana, and land committed to intense cultivation in the future. Hodder is in a difficult spot because some of his funds come from the coal companies, the rest from the Bureau of Land Management. Student volunteers help in the planting. Ask Hodder why the coal companies don't hire people to work along with him, and he shrugs his shoulders.

The stiffer reclamation law just passed in Montana would seem to insure that the land is properly restored. But at present there is no one who knows how to comply with the law, and no one other than the same type of professional hired by the coal companies to enforce it. By the time the real effects of reclamation are known, half the available coal will have been stripped. Meanwhile, the mines get bigger and more numerous, and topsoil continues to be stockpiled. It requires a year for a dragline to travel the length of a present cut, and this means that the cut won't be filled again, and reclamation begun, for three or four years.

"It could take ten years," admits the pit superintendent at Decker. His company is mining a fifty-foot seam near the Wyoming border, and is given more credit than its competitors for voluntary reclamation. No doubt this is one reason the superintendent feels secure when he says, "We're not going to piss away topsoil just to please a few eagle freaks. We'll do reclamation the way we have to do it, and the state agency will have to enforce the law. We're prepared to go to court. We're going to give the vocal environmentalists the shaft, and tell the wealthy farmers and ranchers to stuff it."

In 1916, Bud Redding's father brought his family up from Indian territory in Oklahoma to homestead in Sarpy Creek, wild rolling country isolated between the Little Wolf Mountains and the Crow reservation. The day the Reddings stepped onto their half-section, it was thirty degrees below zero, and three feet of snow covered the ground. For a year they lived in a tent. Bud Redding and his brothers grew up in the log cabin that was eventually built; he married when he was twenty-one, and moved his wife in with him. They managed to buy their own half-section for a dollar an acre, and lived by raising corn, wheat, hogs, and cattle. He and his wife, Vella, survived the Depression—they clearly remember Huey Long's first nationwide radio broadcast—and the great dustbowl years, bought up more land from other

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discouraged homesteaders, and raised their own children in the same house. The daughters all married and moved away, but their son, John, built his own house just down the road. The Reddings raise 300 head of cattle on 6000 acres, and grow about 300 acres of wheat a year in unfertilized soil, harvesting as much as 50 bushels per acre. With an occasional bank loan, they are able to meet their own needs and to improve the land slightly from year to year. When John's wife, Billie, had a son five years ago, the family was glad to have a male heir and another potential worker. The senior Reddings still live in the log cabin, which has been adorned with asbestos siding and electricity. From his front steps Bud Redding can sometimes see his grandson, Rial, playing in the coulee along which Rial's great-grandfather first arrived by wagon almost sixty years ago.

In 1970, the Crow Indians, encouraged by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, sold the coal under 32,000 acres to Westmoreland Resources. Some of the coal lies under the Reddings' land (anyone homesteading after 1914 received only surface ownership). In Montana a law dating from the time when Anaconda Copper and the state legislature were synonymous gives mining companies the right of eminent domain. This means that theoretically the companies can condemn land owned by ranchers if they refuse to sell. The coal companies haven't used this right in Montana—they are reluctant to test its doubtful constitutionality—but they have used the threat of condemnation to convince reluctant ranchers to give up their land, and to keep down the prices.

Redding refused to sign the first contract offered to him, not just because the number of acres to be mined and the price were unspecified, but because he didn't want his land destroyed and a strip mine yawning in the distance. He turned down several subsequent offers, and resisted the arguments of agents working for several companies gathering up leases, although they often came in shifts and kept the Reddings up until two in the morning.

"They'd tell us that all our neighbors had signed away their land, and that if we didn't sign, we'd get nothing. We wouldn't sign, and they'd go to our neighbors and tell them we had signed. They offered royalties on the coal under our land to anyone who could get us to sign—even our relatives. Some things went on around here you wouldn't believe," Bud Redding adds, holding up a letter from Westmoreland threatening him with condemnation. "They told me I had to be off by March [1972] or else. I told them I had sixty acres of wheat to get out, and they said that was just my tough luck."

Both Redding men are lean and tough, with complexions marked by the extremities of Montana weather. They have even dispositions but once John shot with his 30-30 rifle between the feet of a surveyor who insisted he had a right to work on Redding land. They helped form a landowners' association, but some ranchers joined just to push up the price of their own land and then sold out. The Reddings hired several lawyers, only to see them fall under the influence of the coal and land companies. They finally received help from the Northern Plains Resources Council, an ecology-minded group in Billings originally opposed to the North Central Power Study, and an unlikely confederation of disgruntled landowners and zealous college graduates who were a major influence on the legislature in the last session.

"I'm not a radical," says John Redding, "and I'm not an environmentalist. Two years ago I wouldn't have talked to a guy with long hair. Then we got in trouble, and nobody would help us except our closest neighbors, and kids working for the Council that everybody else said were hippies."

The Reddings refused to give in to Westmoreland's demands. Strip-mining operations have begun at the edge of their property. From the road they can see the spiny boom of the dragline, and hear the Cats tearing away the topsoil and they still don't know how close they will come.

"My grandfather settled here," John Redding says, without emotion. "I want Rial to get this land, and I'm willing to sacrifice. When we heard about the energy crisis, we stopped burning our night light, and cut down on the number of heaters we attached to the truck and tractors when the temperature drops. It seems more sensible than tearing up the land."

The office of Westmoreland Resources in Billings is a tasteful arrangement of glass, synthetic paneling, and deep carpets. A visitor must circumvent a wooden stanchion set at a dramatic if useless angle between floor and ceiling to enter the office of secretary and treasurer Charles Brinley, who resembles a young, plump George Peppard. He seems pleased with his role as corporate troubleshooter in Bonanzaland, where he has lived for one year. Brinley wears a white turtleneck sweater that zips up one shoulder, no jacket; he casually balances on the edge of an uncluttered desk, presses his fingertips together.

"Our hearts bleed for these people," Brinley says of the Reddings and others like them. "We're human beings, too. But if a person is totally unreasonable, then the rubber must meet the road. Individuals have to give way to the general good—that's what the free enterprise system is all about."

Stripping eastern Montana and the surrounding country amounts to the destruction of what's left of the West. Coal companies have offered to buy recalcitrant ranchers a piece of land equal to their own in another part of America, but there are no such ranches. In terms of natural beauty, breadth and productivity of the land, and the isolation that has always been a source of values essentially

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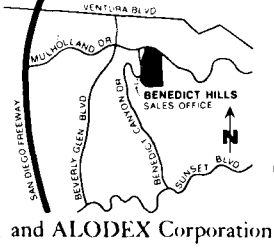

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"Western"—independence, endurance, a certain deprivation—there is no place left to go.

Most of the ranchers who favor coal-mining know the land will be stripped anyway, and they don't want to be surrounded by spoils, without compensation. Money from the coal will enable them to develop what's left of their ranches, or so the argument goes. "It's hard to walk away from ten million dollars," observes a rancher who owns the coal under some of his 30,000 acres near Birney. He may live in an elaborate log cabin twenty miles from the nearest paved road, but he keeps a Cessna 180 out in the field, and is well acquainted with life's amenities. Birney is the Brigadoon of the Powder River basin, settled in the 1880s and later mostly by Mississippians, whose descendants are kin. The men wear black scarves on weekdays, and some ride polo ponies; the older women sometimes speak with a Delta cadence. Here the mining question has divided friends and families, with the young ranchers and the real old-timers opposed to stripping.

The ranchers in favor of the mining seem to believe that the coal companies can reclaim the land—although they complain that soil plowed up by the homesteaders still isn't "right"—and that the mines will not disturb either their views or their lives, with the exception of the influx of new people. "We've learned to live with the mine up at Colstrip," says one, who lives forty miles from the mine and passes it on the highway maybe once a month.

Ann McKinney divides a morning's activities between bucking hay bales off the back of her husband's pickup, and baking chocolate chip cookies for her children's 4-H Club meeting. "It's a good life here," she says, "but it's hard work. People back East may think of us as greedy ranchers, but ranching is our business. If this land is taken out of production, someone will go hungry. Remember, we use the land, and those who love it don't want to see it torn up."

"Coal-mining is an inexorable force" is the weary appraisal of Wally McRae, owner of the Rocker R, a 30,000-acre ranch near Colstrip. McRae has a thick brindle moustache (he is known somewhat affectionately as a "super-radical," a fact that saddens him), a degree in zoology from Montana State, and a reputation as an articulate opponent of strip-mining.

"I could hold my own little island here," he says, "but I'm not sure I want to. The environment may be too hostile for plants and animals once they start burning and converting the coal. Now an acre of coal is worth between $50,000 and $500,000. There aren't enough people in the state of Montana to stop the mining."

Opposition to untrammeled coal development isn't limited to a few ranchers and the Northern Plains Resources Council—the most diligent and effective group. The issue has provided common ground for such unlikely groups as the Farmers Union and the conservative rod and gun clubs. The Northern Cheyenne are divided over the proposal of Continental Oil to build gasification plants on their reservation, and want their own environmental code. Public officials have had second thoughts about coal development, many of them prodded by members of the NPRC, and are acting to insure that the development is at least more orderly than in other parts of America. But the outcome of any contest between the land and the coal industry seems balefully predictable.

Boyd Charter owns thirty sections of ranchland in the splendid Bull Mountains north of Billings. He and his wife spend most of their time there when they are not at home in Billings, and their son, Steve, was raised on the ranch. Charter's resistance to the efforts of outsiders to gain control of his land and the coal under it—some of which he owns—he describes as "the worst thing I have experienced. One day a son of a bitch with a briefcase came by the place, and saw me working in my old clothes, outside the cabin. He must have decided I was stupid, because he offered me a contract for one dollar entitling him to explore for coal. I had to tell him that the door swings out just the way it swings in, and not to come back."

But the man and others like him did come back. Charter refused all the increased offers, and finally warned the speculators and representatives of Consolidation Coal that he would resort to force of arms against trespassers. When Charter discovered that his neighbors were being told that he had sold out to get them to acquiesce, he decided that organized resistance was necessary. Charter and other ranchers in the area formed the Bull Mountains Landowners Association, and helped to block development there, at least temporarily. The effectiveness of the association threatened the coal companies involved, and Charter was considered a key figure in its resistance. A Consolidation vice president flew from Denver to Billings to talk to Charter, and told him to set any price he liked on his ranch.

"I don't want to brag," says Charter, his Camel dangling from his lips, his eyes reflecting amazement, "but I could build a $100,000 home tomorrow if I felt like it. Some people can't understand that money's not everything. I told that man that I knew he represented one of the biggest coal companies and that he was backed by one of the richest industries in the world, but no matter how much money they came up with, they would always be $4.60 short of the price of my ranch."

Before walking out, the Consolidation vice president turned to Charter, and said, "You can be as hard-boiled about this as you want. But we'll get you in the end." □

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LIFE & LETTERS

GOD'S FIRST MISTAKES

by Richard Todd

NINETY-TWO IN THE SHADE
by Thomas McGuane
Farrar, Straus & Giroux, $6.95

Heroic efforts in much intelligent contemporary prose go toward the avoidance of embarrassment. You can see a lot of self-protective hard work in the carefully wrought style of Thomas McGuane, the young author of two novels, *The Sporting Club* and *The Bushwhacked Piano,* that have won him a small but deeply appreciative audience. McGuane is alert to several varieties of exhaustion in the life around him, in fiction, and particularly in his themes. His themes don't want to be reduced to a word, but if this were a seminar, we might call it "Aspects of American Virility." The phrase belongs to L. E. Sissman, who recently praised McGuane in the *New Yorker* as "a more modern, more ironic Hemingway."

McGuane's man in *Ninety-Two in the Shade* is Thomas Skelton, whose situation at the start of this novel is that he's "blown away" on drugs. By the close, he's literally blown away, victim of violence in an absurd quarrel he has allowed to progress largely because it gives him a sense of mortality. Skelton is a dropout marine biologist who wants only to be a sport-fishing guide off Key West, as a way of keeping in touch with reality; the sight of blackfin tuna working bait has greater meaning than whatever he can learn through a microscope. He seeks a place within the seascape: he wants to be located, to feel between sea and sky, he explains, like a waffle in a waffle iron. But wholeness and surety are tough feelings to come by.

Skelton has trouble imagining a future, and his past is ambiguous too. He is the issue of a family that in three generations compresses a short history of the excesses and failures of American men. His grandfather is a psychotically "together" boor, who has exploited his way to millions of dollars and enjoys bizarre sexual frolics (trampolines, mops, and pails of soapy water are involved) with his aging secretary Bella. Skelton's father is a fuddled, ineffectual fellow who has done such things as run an unsuccessful whorehouse and who, after a study of the world's religious literature, takes to his bed, covered with mosquito netting, so that he appears to be in a bassinet. As for Skelton himself, "like so many of us Skelton had tried quite hard not to be crazy," but not always succeeding, he "had from time to time lapsed curiously into not terribly human actions. Perhaps it was his sense of humor; but, well, anyway he seems to have done some barking."

McGuane moves between grotesque comedy and moments of still perception. Skelton and his father enjoy a moment of sanity: ". . . mock serious, his father took up his violin and played the opening of *Corrinne Corrina* hillbilly style and beautiful. Skelton lit a powdery Dutch cigar and listened in a swoon of those sad clodhopper strains, dying day, newspaper boys yelling faintly as they filled their baskets; a swoon that was as much as anything a part of his more than trifling instinct for some kind of topographical perspective upon his own life, as against a vision of cycling chemicals in a closed system that somehow never explained the attrition of the things that ail you."

I quote this passage for what seems to me both good and bad about it: its evocative and allusive qualities, and its cumbersome imprecision. McGuane has been much praised for his style and his style often is extraordinary in its easy elision of moods, its ability to render freshly subjects that breed ennui: drug experience and fishing, to take two examples from this novel. But an odd haze often appears in *Ninety-Two in the Shade.* Taken at long stretches, the prose has a refractive quality. The eye, like a stone skipped across a pond, bounces off the page before sinking into one of McGuane's luminous scenes or images. Both the precision and the murk, I suspect, share a source: McGuane's uneasiness with the heart of this tale.

Thomas Skelton, despite his druggy contemporaneity, is a venerable American hero—misfit, loner, man meant for a frontier that no longer exists, et cetera. Skelton is symbolically set in opposition to much of the darkness of American life: technology, materialism, vio-

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lence. He lives—as in a post-technological dreamland—in the abandoned fuselage of a crashed plane; he flees "Hotcakesland," the neon coast of Florida, for the sea, and he is done in by a depraved representative of American gun toters, Nichol Dance, another fishing guide. The action on which the book turns is, despite its Absurdist trappings, a sort of Western in which the black hat wins. After a bizarre quarrel—Dance sabotages Skelton's first effort at guiding, Skelton sets fire to Dance's boat—Dance, in effect, tells Skelton the town isn't big enough for both of them, that is, he had better give up guiding. Skelton defies him and is shot.

As McGuane is all too well aware, the story turns on tired conventions, and he undercuts them with his jumpy, self-aware prose. Thus, mocking and loving at the same time, he describes Skelton's need to fish: "Thomas Skelton felt that simple survival at one level and the prevention of psychotic lesions based upon empirical observation of the republic depended upon his being able to get out on the ocean . . . not infrequently such simplicity was one of three options, the others being berserking and smoking dope all the livelong day."

However much irony is applied, McGuane seems to have a wistful, if unwilling, attachment to Skelton's doomed romanticism. I find myself thinking that McGuane should turn his formidable imagination to something other than keeping alive the themes he has inherited. One difficulty with a character like Skelton is that he depends too much for his fictive existence on his hatred and affections, on his code. (The comparison with Hemingway is apt.) I suspect the test for McGuane will come when he sets out to create a man who is not lighting out for the territory but trying to find his way into other lives, other heads.

SMALL CHANGES
by Marge Piercy
Doubleday, $8.95

Thomas McGuane and Marge Piercy ought to have something in common: both gifted young American writers, with solid accomplishments and a lot of praise behind them (Piercy is the author of two previous novels as well as three collections of poetry) and both plainly experienced on the hip edge of society. But the difference in their fiction is so striking that in some ways their new books suggest wholly different eras. The first thing you notice in *Small Changes* (particularly coming to it from the wary involution of McGuane's style) is the extraordinary confidence that suffuses the prose. It is written with a moralistic insistence that recalls nineteenth-century novels. Beyond questions of individual sensibilities, I'd say there is a cultural explanation for the difference: Marge Piercy is writing about womanhood—about nascent, not waning, attitudes. She writes from an evident feminist perspective, and the book rides a wave of contemporary feeling that seems to free her from self-consciousness. It's a mixed blessing.

Small Changes recounts the tortured young adulthood of two women who come from quite different pasts to Cambridge, where their lives touch. (It's one of the difficulties of the novel that in fact the connection doesn't go very deep. The women serve as symbolic Sisters, demonstrating the essential solidarity of female experience.) Beth: a lower-middle-class Wasp from Syracuse, whom we meet as a timid bride. Denied the college education she wants, she marries her high school sweetheart, who proves to be a lout, and in sudden bold desperation she flees to Boston, where, following an unsatisfying affair, she moves into a woman's commune, and ultimately to lesbianism. Miriam: a Jew from Brooklyn, who spends a long while in the grip of an affair with the man who is her first lover (he had picked her up in the courtyard of the Museum of Modern Art), an affair that ultimately turns into a *ménage à trois,* the third being his best friend. They are louts of a sort, too. A talented and well-educated mathematician, Miriam gets a job with a computer outfit, shakes free of her lovers, and marries her gentle, intellectual boss—only to discover his capacity for loutishness. She ends up where Beth began, institutionalized in marriage.

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This is SHEILA BURNFORD'S fourth book, and probably her best since the classic *The Incredible Journey*. She has never had a bad review. Not to tempt fate or anything, but: if any reader can find, and send us, a bad review of **ONE WOMAN'S ARCTIC,** we'll send you, free, any title you choose from the Atlantic Monthly Press fall list. If somebody else gets said review in first, we'll write you a nice letter.

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ONE WOMAN'S ARCTIC

by Sheila Burnford

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LITTLE, BROWN

novel is no cheerier than you'd expect to find by raising the topic in a Los Angeles divorce court. Oppression. Entrapment. Amputated lives. Despair and desperation. That that contract holds some chance of communion is not an allowable idea. Miriam, awash in high hopes, says early in her marriage, "I can enjoy being a woman," explaining that she's learned to like cooking. It is an ironic prelude to the misery ahead. Not that woe is limited to marriage. Wherever they go in this novel's world, women have two roles open to them: they may be prisoners or fugitives.

All the newly classic scenes of womanly suffering that we have read in memoirs of the past half-decade are anthologized here. The anesthetic wedding night. ("They had made love finally, but where was the love they had made?") The wife as unpaid servant. The secretary as sexual object. Dirty socks. Sexist rock lyrics. False moans of sexual pleasure. The discovery by the small-breasted that large breasts are no fun either.

If much of this material is programmatic, though, Marge Piercy's voice has its strengths. What father, for instance, can emerge unshaken from this contemptuous passage: "He was what people called good with his children. He did try hard to teach them things, but he got annoyed if they were not interested. He grew more involved in the course of his exposition than in their reactions. His disappointment was crushing. Ariane was already learning to pretend to understand." There is much else to praise in *Small Changes.* The energy of the book doesn't all go toward polemic; events move along compellingly and the social reportage is acute. Piercy is at ease in the trendy computer company (where the air is full of lingo such as "LISP," "compilers," the "Fall Joint"), as well as in communal apartments.

The book begins with a set-piece description of Beth's wedding, for which, her mother says, "We haven't cut any corners. This is no hole in the wall at the courthouse or in the front room. . . ." Even as you accede to the accuracy of the scene, you wonder at the chilliness of the author's portraits of those who perpetrate this awful show. What is absent in this novel is an adequate sense of the oppressor (and his allies), for one thing; and beyond that a recognition that there are limits to a world view that is organized around sexual warfare. It's hard not to think that Piercy feels this, knows that much of the multiplicity and mystery of life is getting squeezed out of her prose, but her polemical urge wins out.

The book ends with the appearance of a new character, to whom Miriam is about to lose her husband. The younger woman, herself divorced, reflects that Miriam hasn't tried hard enough, and she resolves: "Her first marriage had been a disaster, but she thought her second had to be better, with her so willing to work and work at it, unlike some women." How that irony is savored! Marge Piercy gazes down at these hapless characters with the finger-wagging authority of George Eliot. The novel doesn't justify that gusto, though I imagine it's an agreeable feeling.

REGIMENT OF WOMEN
by Thomas Berger
Simon and Schuster, $8.95

Certain feminist simplicities seem to have gotten to Thomas Berger. You can imagine a moment some months ago when Berger went to one too many of those dinner parties at which a reasonable voice says that the world would be a better, a gentler, a fundamentally more *human* place if only women held the power. Did Berger murmur something about Madame Nhu? *Regiment of Women* sounds as if it were begun in the hangover of such a conversation: it is the work of a man who wants to say, "Wait a minute. . . ." Although this is not nearly so rich a novel as his *Little Big Man* (with which it shares some devices), it is subtle and comic.

Berger envisions a time, a century or so hence, when women govern. Men characteristically serve as secretaries, or charpersons, or "mattresses" (male mistresses). Some eunuchs are created for heavy labor. The family has been abolished. Sexual pleasuring is accomplished by women wielding dildos. (Men who can't derive gratification this way are counseled by psychiatrists.) Reproduction occurs in state-super-

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vised facilities, through the use of artificial wombs. To produce the necessary sperm, men are drafted to serve a six-month "sperm term," during which they are marched about like recruits, and are periodically attached to something like a milking machine. It is from one of these camps that Georgie Cornell, reluctant men's liberationist, escapes along with a rebellious woman, who has transvestite leanings—loves dresses and makeup. The government has exploited her perversion by making her a spy, but she turns on her superiors when they try through therapy (playing with guns) to make her into a more feminine woman. The two flee in disguise: he in women's clothing (a lieutenant's shirt and trousers) and she in men's (a skirt and blouse). In a stolen car they make their way through the polluted and unsightly Northeast to Maine, which is still relatively unchanged: the pipe-smoking woman game warden greets them with a "maanin," as does the woman in the plaid hunting shirt who owns the general store. In the woods, they discover the forgotten ways of pre-revolutionary sex, presumably to forge the start of a new society of liberated men.

When you begin this novel it seems highly improbable that Berger can sustain what appears to be a single joke. But he does, because the joke is more complicated than it looks at first. On one level, the book spoofs radical feminists by imitating and hyperbolizing their vision of society, with reversed roles. (Office life in the new world is as grim as ever: women pinch their male secretaries, who snicker at the pomposities they must type: "What doo-doo.") But the humor always cuts two ways. Helped along, no doubt, by the reader's natural distaste for transvestitism, Berger plays upon the American male's current anxieties about his role.

I'd recommend this book—in preference to the Piercy novel, or the work of such feminists as Germaine Greer or Michael Korda—to readers who would contemplate sexism. The nicely ambiguous close of the novel suggests that in the society of liberated men, man may yet again live to be called the oppressor. Georgie Cornell, who in his first

Roberto Estores Age 5. Father has TB. Not improving.

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sexual encounter fears that he has raped his mate, warms to his new role, thinks he'd like to "be boss once in a while," and reflects that "he was the one with the protuberant organ."

I don't mean to give Thomas Berger the last word in this discussion—*Regiment of Women* is a playful book, a useful corrective to single-mindedness. Berger himself shuns the last word, which he gives to Nietzsche: "Woman was God's *second* mistake."

KOZMIC BLUES

by Dan Wakefield

GOING DOWN WITH JANIS
by Peggy Caserta and Dan Knapp
Lyle Stuart, $7.95

BURIED ALIVE
by Myra Friedman
Morrow, $7.95

I have only two regrets about my public life as a writer and a citizen (as opposed to regrets about my private life, which number something like the sands of the Nile); they are (1) that I didn't work for Robert Kennedy's campaign for President in the spring of 1968, and (2) that I postponed calling up Janis Joplin to ask if I could meet and do a story about her for so long that by the time I got around to it she was dead.

These regrets are not on the scale of any Mailer-like illusions that I could have saved either one of them; that I could have helped Bobby Kennedy get elected or shielded him from the bullets of his demented little murderer, any more than that I could have forestalled Janis Joplin's headlong, heartbroken-and-breaking plunge into the only escape she knew from an almost relentless personal pain. The regrets are selfish, because I missed what to me would have been the honor of having in some way of word or deed stood by these two rare and almost opposite public personalities whose work in different ways enriched my own life as well as the lives of millions of others.

I have used the word *honor,* and I anticipate already those readers who will feel it is perhaps an appropriate term to use in one's appreciation of a public servant, but surely not of a popular singer, especially one who so wildly flouted every code of her society's ethics, and morals and manners. Nevertheless, I honor those people who live, if only briefly, with a deep personal anguish and produce from it some kind of art that, if only temporarily, eases the pain of others. I can explain at least part of my feeling by quoting from an essay by Joan Didion in *Slouching Towards Bethlehem,* where in describing a zealous young leader of a tiny Marxist splinter group she comments, "I know something about dread myself, and appreciate the elaborate systems with which some people manage to fill the void, appreciate all the opiates of the people, whether they are as accessible as alcohol and heroin and promiscuity or as hard to come by as faith in God or History."

Indeed any notion of honor will be especially hard to reconcile with one of the two new books about the life of Janis Joplin that have been published this summer. This book can best be described by the words emblazoned on the jacket: "A RAW AND SCATHING PORTRAIT OF JANIS JOPLIN BY HER FEMALE LOVER . . . *Going Down With Janis,* by Peggy Caserta as told to Dan Knapp." Its tone is *True Romance,* with pulpish purple passages such as "the two of us were in love with, and occasionally balling, the same silver-tongue devil of a man." It is a dirty book not because of sexual details or frankness but because of its cheap exploitation of the intimate relationship of a former lover and alleged "friend," who keeps bragging about her own erotic talents in the manner of what might be appropriately called a bisexual chauvinist.

When I first received galleys of another book about Janis Joplin, titled *Buried Alive* and labeled a biography, I confess I was not too optimistic, especially since the author had worked in public relations for Albert Grossman, Janis' manager, and was a former publicity writer for Columbia Records. Books about pop music stars by former pop music publicity people are not likely to be literary landmarks, and I assumed this might well be another though different exploitation bit, a puff job by a star-struck and ambitious PR person who probably wrote in press-release prose.

But when I began the first chapter concerning the background of Janis Joplin's hometown of Port Arthur, Texas, I immediately had the feeling that this was a book that had been seriously and sensitively researched by someone who had an eye for social nuance, an ear for speech, and a sure command of a clear, hard prose that drove forward with purpose. And, later on, when the author told of her accidental entry into the world of pop music and the employ of Albert Grossman, I knew that she was peculiarly suited to write the first serious biography of Janis Joplin.

It seems clear that Myra Friedman was *in* the pop music world but not *of* it. Growing up in St. Louis, she studied classical piano, and later majored in music at Northwestern University. Even though she had worked for Decca and Columbia record companies, she had never been part of the rock scene. The Grossman office was the Vatican of the rock hierarchy, handling such a hallowed name as Bob Dylan, and Miss Friedman reports that suddenly "being in the center of the rock world had me far adrift from the universe I knew."

She went to work there in January of 1968, just a few weeks before one of Grossman's new clients, Janis Joplin, came for her first New York performance. Miss Friedman came to know this new star professionally and as a friend, and writes of her:

> Janis lit my life in innumerable ways for almost three years, as she dominated it too. If the zany creature that the public saw, all that campy, trivial bluster, was real enough in its way, it was far from the substance of her deeper glow. The hysteria, the extravagance, and the foolish noise were a barren fuss embraced by barren hearts, and it was a lost child who would kick up such rubbish to gain entrance into rooms so empty.

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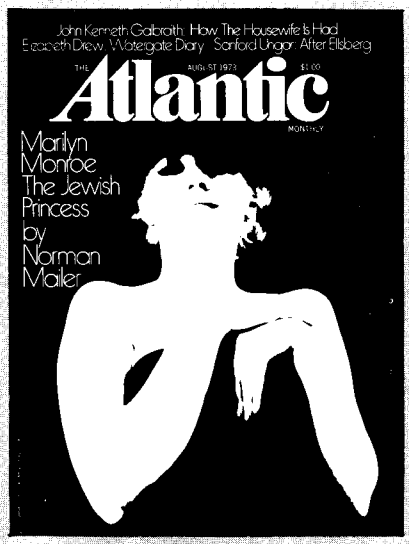

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As Miss Friedman guides us through the grossness and glitter of the cult world of rock, she makes us aware of how empty are its rooms; we see it through Miss Friedman's cold eye in what so often is its deadly and arch pretentiousness, its slickness and greed. She says of the members of Janis' entourage:

> They were "cool," thus uninvolved; "collective," thus impersonal; "hip," thus uncommunicative; "free," thus irresponsible; and much of the time "stoned," thus usually incapable of making sense. Naturally there were individual differences, but that was the tone of it all, an insignia of manners and morals as salient as a Legionnaire's cap, with "keep on rockin'" the emptiest of prayers, and the style, emotional atrophy.

That is the essence of the hip style of The Sixties that reached its ultimate form in the rock scene. Janis Joplin was a part of it, indeed a high priestess of it, but she did not create it, nor was she created by it.

Her own rebellion and its resulting artistry and tragedy seem to me to belong to a much older, deeper, classical tradition, that of the artist as outcast, rejecting and rejected by established society, torn between the desire to be part of it and the inability to conform to it. That tradition, in America, has its roots in adolescence, in the crucial, and for so many, the crucible-like experience of high school.

Janis grew up and went to high school in the small oil refinery town of Port Arthur, Texas, and reached her teens in 1956, long before the voice of the Beatles had been heard. She was exceptionally bright and talented; she read and painted and expressed strange ideas, such as that maybe racial integration was all right. She was a kind of Tomboy Zelda, defying the mores of the town by hanging out with a group of four boys into which she insinuated herself, a group that aroused suspicion by reading books unassigned in the classroom, listening to jazz, going out on hot summer nights drinking beer and singing and, in sweet daring defiance of the flat land they found themselves in, "they climbed the water towers."

It seems part of the legend of which I am speaking, of which Janis was a part, that the beautiful artist springs from the ugly duckling, the butterfly from the worm, if it indeed can survive the wormhood, one that came to Janis in the traditional physical adolescent afflictions of both boys and girls: "Her chubbiness bloated to a hefty bigness; she developed a terrible skin condition, far beyond anything that could be termed a teenager's siege of acne. . . ." The other students called her "Pig," and she took to drinking and swearing and wearing outlandish clothes—though before the onslaught of her physical change, she had tried to conform, had joined clubs and activities, and one of the many beautiful and heartbreaking pictures in this book shows her in graduation cap and gown, a grinning girl in the school yearbook. Beside her name are no queenly mentions or popularity crowns, but the maintenance of a B average membership in the Future Teachers of America, the Future Nurses of America—and, God bless her, in The Slide Rule Club.

She had tried to be like the others, but it didn't work. Once her mother was called to school and was "asked why she couldn't get Janis to be 'average.'"

Later, Janis' father tells Miss Friedman of some of the letters he exchanged with his daughter when she had fled far from Port Arthur and was heavily into methedrine, though her parents knew only that she was in trouble. Mr. Joplin said, "She just felt nothing was good and she wanted to know 'Is this all there's gonna be?' And I explained 'Yes, that's all and you've got to find out how to live with it. This *is* life, and you've got it.'"

I shuddered as I read those lines, and recalled the feeling James Agee described in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* when he was driving on a sweltering summer Sunday afternoon through the dusty, deserted towns of Alabama, past the white frame houses with the shades drawn and the porches "empty beyond any idea of emptiness." In a way it seemed to him like the end of the world but then it struck him as worse than that: "For this was not the end of the world, it was contemporary . . . and this dread was imposed by Sunday, only for a space, and this was what life was like, the only world we have."

I think that somewhere in here is a definition of what is meant by "average," in the way Janis' teachers wanted her to be. Perhaps the acceptance that "this is what life is like," that "this is what there is," is the mark of the average or normal person, and that those who find that condition unbearable, who rage against "the way it is," are those who are not and can never be "average" or "normal"; they are no better than other people but indeed are different, and are the ones who may turn out to be murderers or artists. If such people have only the rage inside them, they become the Mansons and Oswalds; if they have a talent or genius to forge that rage into art, they are the James Agees and Janis Joplins.

And at some point in Janis Joplin's anguished adolescence, as she walked around inside her bloated body and scarred face, she called up a friend and said, "Hey! Guess what! I think I can sing!"

The singing must have helped, the release and the attention, but it didn't spare her from such continued lethal assaults as occurred when, attending the University of Texas at Austin, the Greek-led set of collegiate socialites fraternally voted her "The Ugliest Man on Campus."

You wonder that her musical style was often a scream?

Indeed, no amount of applause and adulation could convince her that she was not the "pig" her peers had branded her, and at the height of her fame as a singer and even a sex symbol, when young men rushed to the stage to touch her, she called Myra Friedman and said, "If I just wasn't so ugly . . . Well I *am* ugly, I am!" And in spite of all her frantic couplings with men and with women, with pretty boys and girls and celebrities and stars, she was to complain drunkenly to Tuesday Weld, "I'm a big star, and I can't even get laid!" When after a triumphant concert a friend tried to assure her that everyone loved her, she said, "Doesn't it occur to you that I just don't believe that?"

The scars of Port Arthur and Austin, of high school and college, and her responses to them, were nothing peculiar to The Sixties. In some essential way, her story was not so much a story out of

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Rider as it was of Huck Finn and Holden Caulfield, and Mick in *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter.* Where it enters the mythology of The Sixties is in the legend that finally such lost and running people, such outcasts and aliens of straight society, suddenly had some place to go, some place where even *they* could belong, observe their own rituals and customs, be loved by kindred spirits.

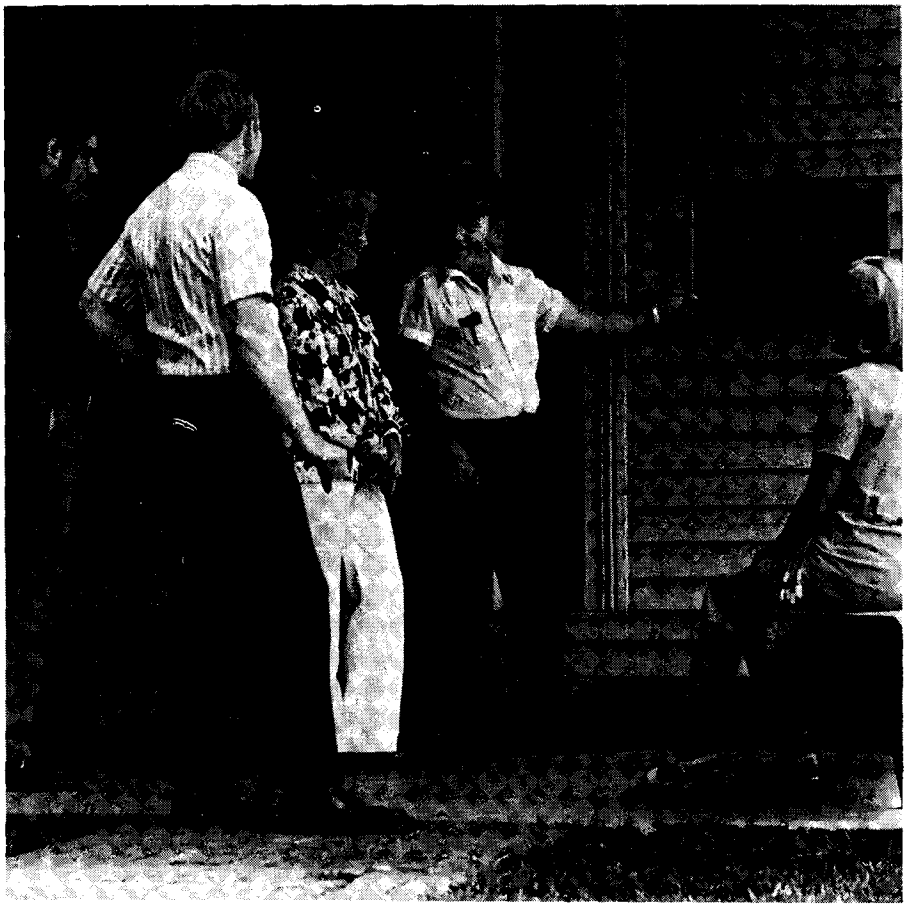
It was heard in the land that such people could even gather and be different together, be happy and whole, in a magic city called San Francisco, which had within it a haven called Haight-Ashbury which some of its starry-eyed—and soon stony-eyed—inhabitants regarded as being "just like a Christian community in Rome."

It was a bright new dream, a soothing dream, and, as Miss Friedman describes it:

> The believers in this one thought they could love everybody and that the mechanical designs of modern society need not extend to all. They would purge themselves of envy. They would cleanse their hearts of greed. The separate boundaries of the self they would erase, so that they would lovingly dissolve into the ego-less mass. . . . They would turn to the past but revel in the present: neon, day-glo, electricity, chemicals—all would bring the Kingdom of God.

After running from Port Arthur and Austin, running across the country, to Venice, California, and New York City and San Francisco, and even back again to Austin and to Port Arthur, where she made one last desperate try to conform, and told her parents she was going to marry and made a Lone Star quilt while her mother sewed a wedding dress, only to have the prospective groom change his mind; after all that running and singing and drinking and doping, she returned once again to San Francisco, in 1966, when, as Miss Friedman explains, there was a current there that "produced some of the most marvelously energetic, celebratory popular music the world has ever known. It also brought about a verbal soddenness by which measure the beat generation was positively scholastic, and it brought the abuse of some very destructive drugs."

In her first stay in San Francisco



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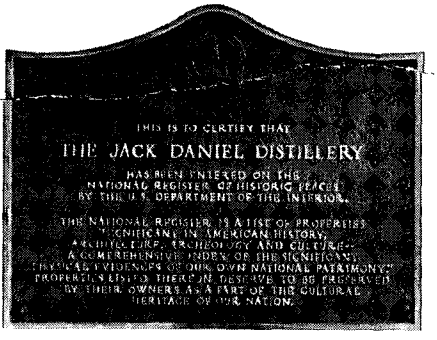

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in 1962, Janis had gotten heavily into dope, and Miss Friedman believes this happened because "dope would bring her belonging, and that above all, was what she was after, always."

But she also, more deeply, was always after any way she could find to ease her own personal pain, and this is reflected in the kind of dope she most favored. She didn't much care for grass, and was terrified of the psychedelic drugs. Yet those were the core drugs of the hip mystique, the drugs that would have brought the most sense of belonging.

She took acid once of her own free will, and after that when she swilled down some wine and was told it had LSD in it she screamed and rushed to the bathroom and made herself vomit. She was also vehement in her anger toward the hippie trick of putting acid in the food or drink of unsuspecting people, and raged at a groupie who thought this was "groovy," saying, "Hey, if somebody wants to screw up their own head, maybe that's their business, but I'd like to know what the difference is between people who fuck with other peoples' brains, and cops who get called 'fascist pigs' when they go around smashing skulls. Now you wanna tell me the difference?"

The drugs most important and eventually deadly to her were alcohol and heroin, drugs that do not "expand" the brain but numb it, do not "raise" consciousness but help blot it out. For a while she kicked heroin but she couldn't get off alcohol. And finally, alone in a room in the Landmark Motel in Los Angeles, she took an overdose of heroin, whether by design or accident will never be known, but certainly the design of her life was leading toward it one way or other, one time or other.

It is part of her legend, to some extent created by herself, that she didn't worry about her singing, just stood up and screamed and "felt" the music; but in spite of the drugs and the booze and the punishing life she led, she worried and cared and worked at her music. Elliot Mazur, who did editing and sound mixing for Janis' album *Cheap Thrills,* told Miss Friedman: "She was *incredibly* on top of it. For two

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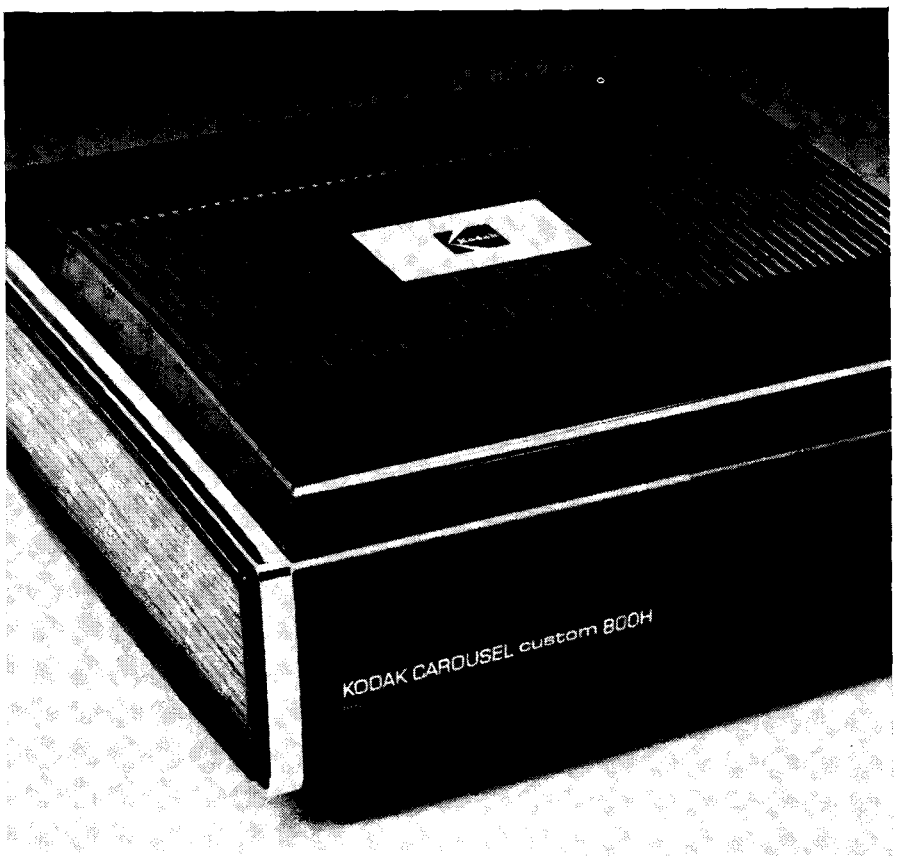
weeks, only Janis, myself, and the engineer would stay, from two in the afternoon until seven in the morning. Anything about her just having a good time and not working at it is just bullshit! I never *knew* an artist that worked harder."

In her later recordings that work and artistry became even more evident, and those who accuse her of only being able to "scream" have never listened to her plaintive rendition of "Little Girl Blue" on the Kozmic Blues album, or the power and irony of the song she wrote herself on the Pearl album, "Lord Won't You Buy Me a Mercedes Benz."

The music is what she has left us, and I happen to believe it will last a long time, and it is also my opinion that the music sustained rather than destroyed her. When, near the end, a friend pleaded with her to stop, if stardom was causing such chaos, she said of her singing, "It's the only thing I have." And, as brutal as the world of rock may be, it does not necessarily lead to its stars' demise. At the time of this writing, the Beatles are alive and well and wealthy, as are Mick Jagger and the Rolling Stones, and in fact all of them except Janis, Jimi Hendrix, and Jim Morrison. I would say the mortality rate among poets is as high, and in either case I have never believed in "cultural" explanations of self-destruction, such as Kenneth Rexroth's accusation on the death of Dylan Thomas: "You killed him in your Brooks Brothers suits."

Janis Joplin's anger and depression and hurt and the beauty she wrenched from them were fitted out in the trappings of her time and place, the feathers and fringe and bright colors, booze and speed and smack and promiscuous mating so recklessly and desperately used to try to drown the loneliness and get through the day, but beneath all of that was an older, deeper story, the human predicament that some can never accept, that a few make music of and so make it easier for others to bear, the "Kozmic Blues" brought up to date, articulated for their own particular time. Like all the genuine ones who have sung the story for their own generation, Janis Joplin did not go gentle into that good night.



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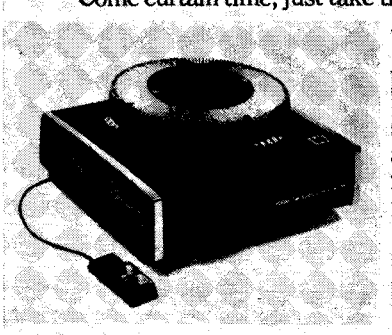

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NO BUSINESS LIKE NEWS BUSINESS

by Zoltan Sarfathy

News, a business, has constantly been harassed by the Administration, a government. Those who speak Administration, a language, say that people in the News business are no different from anybody else. But that is clearly wrong, because no other business has constantly been harassed by the Administration.

News answers badly. People in News have certain remarkable ineptitudes: notably, answering the Administration. News quotes the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, not, as it has been successfully used, to protect the rights of highway billboard owners to a piece of highway or the rights of dirty movie makers to make and show dirty movies, but to protect the rights of people who read or watch news to read or watch news of which the government is not co-author. It says the First Amendment establishes rights not for people in News but for people who consume News.

This is very dumb.

These days no one is very convincing fighting for somebody else's rights. Or very efficient. If people in News want to fight for anybody's rights, they should fight for their own rights. No one will believe them otherwise. Especially the Administration. They should say the First Amendment gives us rights, we News, we ourselves. If they don't believe that, they should say so anyway. If they say we are fighting for somebody else's rights, everybody will think they are dishonest. If they say we are fighting for our own rights, everybody will think they are Pragmatic.

Being Pragmatic is something the Administration respects.

They will earn the respect even of Conservatives.

Conservatives do a special job for the Administration in its role as a government. All governments act against some people and for some people. There are people who get rich and people who get fired, people who get subsidies and people who are lectured about self-reliance. After such actions are taken, it is the job of Conservatives to help the Administration by expressing these actions as Ideas.

People in News must understand these relationships and stop relying on the Constitution and the Courts. They should use the Constitution and the Courts skillfully the way other businesses do, which is quite different from relying on them. The problem of people in News is like the problems of people who lay pipelines and build roads and pack meat and lay keels. The Administration, which says it wants more competition in the News business, has not said it wants more competition in these businesses. The Administration thinks the News business is different.

How is it different?

It is different because it is inept, and those other businesses are very ept indeed. They are eptest at getting what they want from the Administration and fighting for what they want until they get it. The most important way they fight for what they want is to hire someone else, someone who knows how, to do the fighting. You do not see oil field boomers testifying for the Alaska pipeline or ditch-diggers making speeches for the pristine integrity of the Highway Trust Fund. They have lawyers, lobbyists, and communications experts do their fighting for them. People in the News business, who are called journalists, think they can do this work themselves, and they are very wrong.

No journalist is a communications expert. Any journalist who could or bothered to become a communications expert would stop being a journalist. It is the job of a communications expert to know what effect an event or a report about an event will have on most people, what it will make them do. The best communications experts know what they want the public to do and put out those reports which will bring this about, and no others. Journalists are very bad at this and tend to report everything they know. It is inconceivable that they could fight their own fight successfully.

Not long after Vice President Agnew said in Des Moines that the Administration was moving against the News business, some other government officials ruled that the price of milk must not be raised. Since then the price of milk has been raised but the Administration continued to harass the News business until Watergate entered upon the scene. The difference is that the people who sell milk knew what to do about their problem.

They hired somebody to give a lot of money to the political fund the Administration was collecting. Although it was indeed a very large sum of money, the price of milk went up several hundred times that amount. So every seller of milk who contributed to this donation got his contribution back very fast, and now keeps getting it back over and over. People in News could do that. It's not hard.

First, every person in the News business would be assessed one-tenth of one percent of his income from News. This would amount to about two million dollars a year if you leave out publishers. This would rent an office and hire a lobbyist with a secretary and an expense account. (Police, court, and legislative reporters could contribute half of their Christmas booze to keep the expense account down.) It would also put a major law firm on retainer, and still leave enough for a substantial contribution to the right political campaign fund which would be contributed not when a political campaign is about to start

LETTERS OF ANTON CHEKHOV
Selected and edited by Avrahm Yarmolinsky
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but when the News business needs some help. The word will get around that the News business is a possible source of political contributions and News will have a new stature.

As for the First Amendment, it should not be forgotten. It has a ring to it. The Conservatives could use it to transform into an Idea whatever it was the campaign contribution bought. The retained lawyers could use it in a most effective way. On those frosted glass double doors which lawyers like, with the names of the partners on the left-hand door, the right-hand door could say: "Committee for the Preservation of the First Amendment."

If it is a go-getter sort of law firm it will profit from this new approach, and in time, things being as they are, the right-hand door would also say:

"Committee for the Preservation of the Second Amendment."

"Committee for the Preservation of the Third Amendment."

"Committee for the Preservation of the Fourth Amendment. . . ."

THE PERIPATETIC REVIEWER

by Edward Weeks

SURVIVE THE SAVAGE SEA
by Dougal Robertson
Praeger, $7.95

Only an extraordinarily resourceful mariner, a skipper out of Hakluyt, could have survived to write this perilous and intimate chronicle. It is the very human account of how Robertson and his wife, their three children, and Robin, a Welsh college student, bested the squawls, the Doldrums, and the broiling sun of the Pacific for thirty-seven days, first in an inflatable raft, then in a nine-foot dinghy with a six-inch freeboard, after their schooner had been attacked and sunk by killer whales. Dougal was no amateur. During his twelve years of seafaring in the British merchant marine, most of it in the Far East, he had acquired a master mariner's certificate, a memory of charts, and a capacity for make-do.

In 1951 he had fallen in love with Lyn, who was then nursing in Hong Kong, and after their marriage they decided to raise a family on a dairy farm in North Staffordshire. It was hard work and slim picking, and in 1970 they sold out and invested the proceeds in *Lucette,* a forty-three-foot schooner of nineteen tons, in which, after it had been caulked and the hull planking renewed, they planned to circumnavigate the globe with their children. They left Falmouth, England, at the end of January, 1971, and weathered a sixty-mile-an-hour gale off Finisterre which proved that *Lucette* was seaworthy. After drying out in Lisbon they enjoyed fair weather to the Canary Islands and thence to the Bahamas, where Anne, their oldest, remained ashore. The hurricane season they spent in Miami, where the kids caught up with their schooling, and there they purchased the dinghy (which was to be their lifesaver) and the raft. Then early in the new year, after a brief landing at the Galapagos, they headed out into the largest, loneliest stretch of ocean in the world. Aboard were the skipper and Lyn; Douglas, their oldest son (eighteen), the twins, Neil and Sandy (twelve), and Robin Williams, who was hitchhiking to New Zealand.

Two and a half days out Dougal was taking an early morning fix with the sextant "when sledgehammer blows of incredible force struck the hull . . . the noise of the impact almost deafening my ears to the roar of inrushing water." In the scramble to abandon ship each seized what he could, the sharp vegetable knife, the water containers, a bag of onions and another of oranges, a box of flares; the raft inflated with a bang and they were all safely aboard with the half-swamped dinghy tied astern in the few minutes before the *Lucette,* their home for eighteen months, "slowly curtsied below the waves." Douglas, who had grabbed the huge Genoa sail and a spool of fishing line, called the turn. "Killer whales.

"So humanly right and so beautifully wrought."
—*Robert Penn Warren*

The well-known poet—who is also the director of The Atlantic Monthly Press—looks back through his years of outward success and inner turmoil, remembering his remarkable parents and such friends as Thomas Wolfe, Sylvia Plath and Robert Frost.

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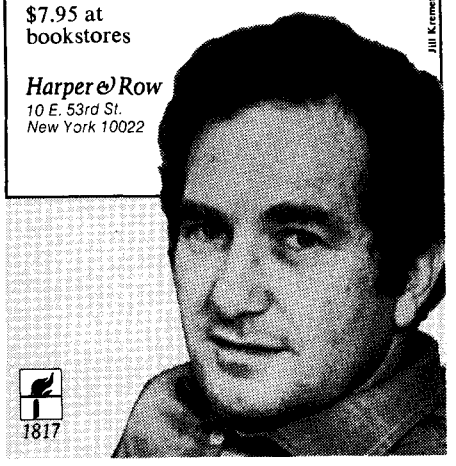

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All sizes, about twenty of them. Sandy saw one with a big V in its head. I think three of them hit us at once."

They were out of the shipping lane, without maps, compass, instruments of any kind, steering by sun and stars, and knowing that the Humboldt Current was bearing them north into the Doldrums. Dougal, with a makeshift rig and a sea anchor for protection in a storm, estimated that their nearest hope was the coast of Costa Rica, perhaps fifty days away. Water was rationed from the start, the rain funneled through a tarpaulin into the empty containers. They breakfasted on flying fish, which fell into their cockpit, they wrestled sea turtles into the raft, killed them, drank the blood, relished the eggs, and hung the steaks to dry. When the raft wore out, the six of them were cramped into the dinghy. Dougal with improvised spear would fling aboard a fish of twenty-five pounds while the famished frantically trimmed ship. He kept their little craft seaworthy while Lyn, with her unshakable faith, made light of their boils and sunburn and thirst; kept them singing the Scottish and Welsh ballads, and at the worst of times, "For Those in Peril on the Sea." She conjured up their happy times of the past and the meals they would eat in "Dougal's Kitchen" once they were ashore. They were always accompanied by sharks, some longer than the dinghy; when the big ones bumped their bottom, Dougal would drive them off with his spear. It was the human spirit which sustained their punishing fight for survival, and in their long struggle there are two remarks a landlubber will not soon forget: Lyn's insistence to Dougal on their first day, "We must get these boys to land!" and Dougal's angry remonstrance to her when his endurance had reached the breaking point just before their rescue, "Lyn, if you don't be quiet and stop nagging, I'll leave you and go to sea!"

A LIFE
by Wright Morris
Harper & Row, $5.95

Floyd Warner, the hero of this skillfully interwoven novel, had been born in the family homestead in Merrick County, Nebraska, and he had been a scoffer for as far back as he could remember. He was the only son of a pontificating Adventist and as he rebelled against everything his father did, it pleased him to stay home on the Sabbath and read the works of Colonel Ingersoll while his five sisters and his parents were at church. Short, slight, and stubbornly independent, Floyd hired himself out as a threshing hand at the age of fifteen and never returned to his father's house. He did keep in touch with his favorite sister, Viola, sending back to her postcards with taunting messages about the Almighty, which he thought would rile her, and which she read for what they were, a signal of his love and his loneliness. When he had saved enough to marry, he courted Muriel who was part Indian, Muriel who had turned his thoughts away from the big soft Clayton girls when he watched her being baptized in the river, her head low to the water, her arms across her breast so imploringly. They made their home on the bank of the Pecos River in New Mexico, where for seventeen years he ground a meager living as a sheep rancher. They were compatible, there were no children, and, on Muriel's sudden death, the shell in which he lived began to harden. His second marriage to a younger woman might as well not have happened it ended so quickly; he closed out and began the wandering which finally ended in a trailer colony in California.

All this is in the past but not beyond counting as the story begins. At eighty-two, Warner is now the last survivor of his family, an old man in the eyes of the public, though that is not the way he sees himself, nor is it the affectionate view held by some in the trailer colony. But he feels the sadness of having outlived his contemporaries and the mystery of death, which has so recently claimed his sister Viola. There is no one left to give him solace. In his 1927 Maxwell he heads back for Nebraska to visit her grave and to attend to her effects. With him is the eleven-year-old orphan boy who had been living with Warner since his parents, relatives by marriage, were killed in an automobile accident the year before.

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Warner hopes that the boy may find some of his own people back in Nebraska. On the way he picks up Stanley and the girl, Joy, a pair of hippies; the boy falls in with them and through their carelessness Viola's place is set afire and burned to the ground. Feeling his age, musing on what had been, and lightheaded, he starts back for California; and in the first diner there are two contenders for his front seat: a white bum with dirty bare feet and a stolid Indian. It is the Indian who wins out. And so begins his strange terminal journey.

The pleasure in this short book is in following the revelation of Floyd's character as his skeptical, clean, practical mind shuttles back and forth; I feel less sure of his misty anticipation of death. He is not heroic, yet episode by episode, almost grudgingly at times, we concede our sympathy to Age.

DEPARTING GLORY:
Theodore Roosevelt as ex-President
by Joseph L. Gardner
Scribner's, $12.50

When President McKinley was assassinated on September 6, 1901, T.R., the Vice President, at forty-two became the youngest man to assume the highest office. The week after McKinley's funeral, Roosevelt's friend Nicholas Murray Butler, the energetic president of Columbia University, was in Washington, and before dining together the two men went for a walk. T.R., speaking with emotion, confessed his own sense of inadequacy, but Butler reassured him: he would do well and was certain of election in 1904. "The real problem that confronts you," Butler continued, "is whether you can be a sage at fifty. If you can, your permanent reputation seems to me certain. If you cannot, then the outlook is different." It is this contingency, so wisely predicted, that Mr. Gardner has enlivened in his well-written, sympathetic, good-tempered book.

For all his misgivings, T.R. soon took command. He brought suit against the Northern Securities Company, the first of the several giant combinations to be dissolved for restraint of trade. He stepped into the middle of the coal strike, insisting that the operators should accept the findings of a presidential commission. He set in motion the building of the Panama Canal. What with his tennis-playing Cabinet, his horseback rides in Rock Creek Park, and the happiness with which his family had taken over the White House, T.R. was having a bully time.

Naturally, he had his heart set on reelection. As Mr. Dooley said, "Tis Teddy alone that's runnin', and he ain't r'runnin', he's gallopin'." The statement which T.R. issued to the press on election night, 1904, concluded with the sentence, "Under no circumstances will I be a candidate for or accept another nomination." Once released, writes Gardner, the words could never be recalled. T.R. eventually backed them up by choosing William Howard Taft as his successor.

He had just turned fifty when he left the capital, and the problem of what to do next was, at the outset, fascinating. T.R. needed to supplement his income and happily became a contributing editor to *The Outlook* at an annual salary of $12,000. The naturalist in him, so long cooped up, was eager to make an African safari with his second son Kermit, to be partly financed by the ten articles he was to write for *Scribner's* for a fee of $50,000. It was a triumphant trip, with many specimens for the National Museum, marred only by the recurrence of the fever he had picked up eleven years earlier in the Cuban Campaign and by the rumor that Taft had broken with a few of Roosevelt's favorites. From the White Nile he returned to Europe where, restored to good health, he visited one crowned head after another, liking them all with the exception of Queen Wilhelmina. He pictured the monarchs writing to "tell the one ahead what sort of barbarian I was and what I might say. . . . In fact, I think each ruler screwed his throne down a little tighter as I approached."

But the acclaim awaiting him when he landed at New York was more than hero worship; his Progressive friends were there to tell him that the Republican Party was in a bad way and that Roosevelt's duty was to jump in and save it. His break with Taft was followed by his unsuccessful bid for the nomi-

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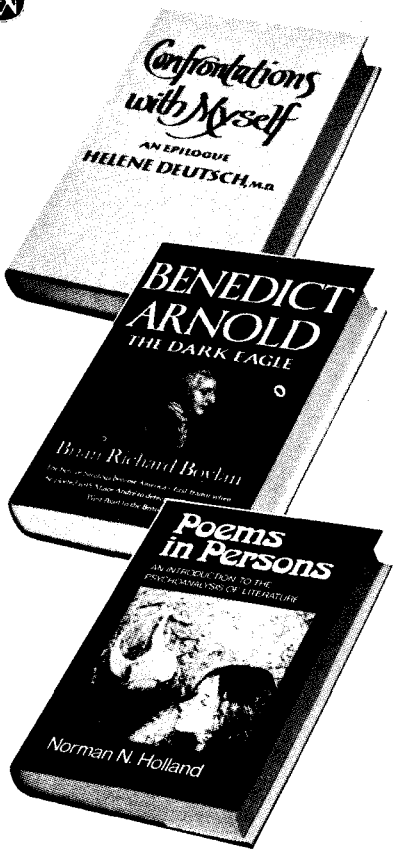

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nation at the convention in Chicago, and then by his fateful words, "My hat is in the ring," as the leader of the new Bull Moose insurgents. As Mr. Gardner shows, T.R. had his private misgivings, knew the odds were against him, and was his heroic self when a would-be assassin shot at him at a distance of less than thirty feet as he was about to speak in Milwaukee. The bullet had been slowed by passing through the manuscript, a long one, and by the iron spectacles case in his pocket, and it was still in his chest when he stood up to make his rambling discourse.

He was not to die a martyr, but the dismay of his defeat by Woodrow Wilson and the physical exhaustion of his long expedition to explore the River of Doubt in Brazil took their toll, and he was an old and tired man when he emerged from the jungle in 1916. A fighter to the last, he argued passionately for our joining the Allies, and he pleaded with the Secretary of War and with President Wilson to be allowed to lead a hand-picked division to France. The President was right to refuse him, for T.R. was in no condition and the discrimination would have been resented throughout the Army. The old lion retired to Sagamore Hill to lick his wounds and to live in the letters from his four sons at the front.

Life & Letters Contributors

Richard Todd is an associate editor of *The Atlantic* and a regular contributor to these pages.

Dan Wakefield is the author of several books of nonfiction as well as two novels, *Going All the Way* and the recently published *Starting Over.*

Zoltan Sarfathy is not the well-known Hungarian journalist.

Edward Weeks and Phoebe Adams write regularly for these pages.

Poets in This Issue

John Hall Wheelock (page 46) is the author of numerous books of poetry. His first published poem appeared in 1900.

Anne Hussey (page 51) has been appointed a Fellow of the Radcliffe Institute for the current academic year.

SHORT REVIEWS: BOOKS

by Phoebe Adams

Frieda Lawrence by Robert Lucas. Viking, $8.95. Frieda von Richthofen, the impecunious baroness who married a British professor and left him for D. H. Lawrence, was remarkable on more counts than her preference for genius over scholarship. She deserves a biography of her own, and Mr. Lucas has written a suitable one—admiring, affectionate, and humorous. If it is sometimes a trifle sentimental, the quality is forgivable; Frieda's defiance of the conventions of her class and time, her stubborn battle for Lawrence's health, her tantrums, even her sporadic infidelities, were conducted with a larger-than-life enthusiasm that provokes strong emotional response.

Jason and Medeia by John Gardner. Knopf, $7.95. What in the goddess's name has possessed this intelligent author to tackle, on wavering feet, a hexametrical epic? English has always refused to endure such Homeric adventures.

Dickie's List by Ann Birstein. Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, $6.95. Dickie is a rising young editor in charge of a gaggle of authors who give him much concern although they are, realistically speaking, a notably harmless flock. Such story as exists is told largely through Dickie's wife, the kind of heroine who constantly applies elaborate sensibility to matters of no importance. Gracefully and intelligently written, the book is never as comic or as sharp as it tries to be.

The 92nd Tiger by Michael Gilbert. Harper & Row, $6.95. Mr. Gilbert has concocted a shamelessly absurd but effectively entertaining thriller about a television star hired as military adviser to a misguided Arab princeling. Plenty of intrigue and bloodshed and wily villains and no nonsense about taking a word of it seriously.

Ward 402 by Ronald J. Glasser, M.D. Braziller, $6.95. Dr. Glasser, who wrote a fine account of medical experiences in Vietnam, has now attempted a novel about work in the children's ward of a large hospital. It is not at all a good novel, but the problems of medical ethics and procedure that Dr. Glasser raises deserve serious attention.

Adventures with D. W. Griffith by Karl Brown, edited by Kevin Brownlow. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, $10.00. Still in his teens, Karl Brown was hired as assistant to Griffith's great cameraman, Bitzer, and worked through the making of both *The Birth of a Nation* and *Intolerance.* His memoir of those early Hollywood days is richly detailed and often very funny, for Mr. Brown has approximated his adolescent view. He eyed his brilliant seniors with a mixture of awe, envy, and contempt, worked ferociously without necessarily knowing what he was doing, and took a touchy, nervous pride in his survival. Illustrations.

Sir Noel Coward: His Words and Music edited by Lee Snider. Random House, $5.95. Thirty-two of the best songs from Coward's lifetime of superb light music. Piano and guitar. This is a fine, nostalgic collection, but, as is usual with such publications, the book has to be beaten to the page-shedding stage before it will stay put on a music rack. Does nobody in any publishing house ever try playing from one of these things?

The Hall of the Mountain King by Howard H. Snyder. Scribner's, $8.95. In 1967, Mr. Snyder was a member of the Wilcox Mount McKinley Expedition. His account of the climb is primarily intended as a lesson and warning for other mountaineers, but even nonclimbers will become spellbound by the slow pileup of seemingly trivial difficulties and errors that finally led to disaster. Photographs and maps.

Exterminator! by William S. Burroughs. Viking, $6.95. Since the book is labeled a novel, one is obliged to look for some kind of continuity in it, which is unfortunate. The chapters, taken as individual sketches, are inventive, glitteringly clever attacks on various

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regrettable aspects of contemporary life. Viewed as a whole, they become the diatribe of an aging homosexual who would destroy the world because his own life is less gay than it used to be.

RED ADAM'S LADY by Grace Ingram. Stein & Day, $7.95. Whoever Grace Ingram really is, she (could it be he? not likely—the hero is decidedly a woman's man) writes like a cross between Georgette Heyer and Dumas père. The story is set in northern England during the disorderly reign of King Stephen, and what with constant violence and acid dialogue, there is not a dull paragraph in it.

UTAH by David Muench. Charles Belding, $22.00. Mr. Muench's beautiful color photographs range from close-ups of minute lichens to rolling mountain panoramas, and are calculated to put all but hopeless agoraphobes on the road to Utah immediately. The text by Hartt Wixom is utilitarian and brief.

THE CONFESSIONS OF LADY NIJO translated by Karen Brazell. Doubleday Anchor Books, $2.95. At the age of fourteen, Lady Second Avenue, a noblewoman of most distinguished ancestry, became a royal concubine. Years later, fallen out of favor (and small wonder, for she was a recalcitrant girl who liked almost any bed better than the emperor's), she wrote her memoirs. They are thick with the kind of elliptical, punning Japanese poetry that cannot be decently translated into English, and are constantly awash with tears, but they provide a lively, sharp-witted description of court life in thirteenth-century Japan. The book was forgotten for centuries and has only recently been rediscovered.

HALF REMEMBERED: A Personal History by Peter Davison. Harper & Row, $7.95. The autobiographer is the author of four books of poetry, is poetry editor of *The Atlantic,* and director of the Atlantic Monthly Press.

MARILYN by Norman Mailer. Grosset & Dunlap, $19.95. An excerpt from this illustrated biography appeared in the August *Atlantic.*

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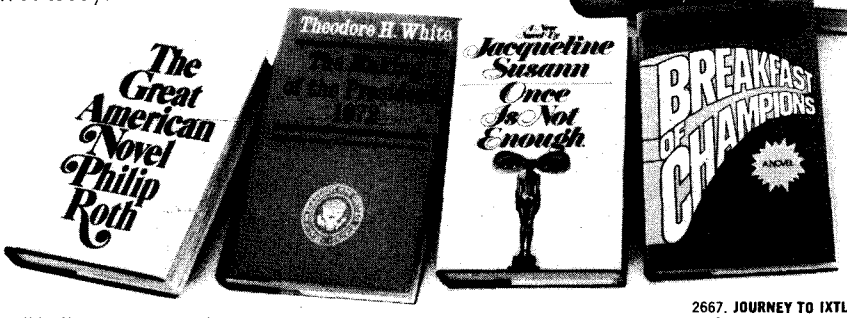

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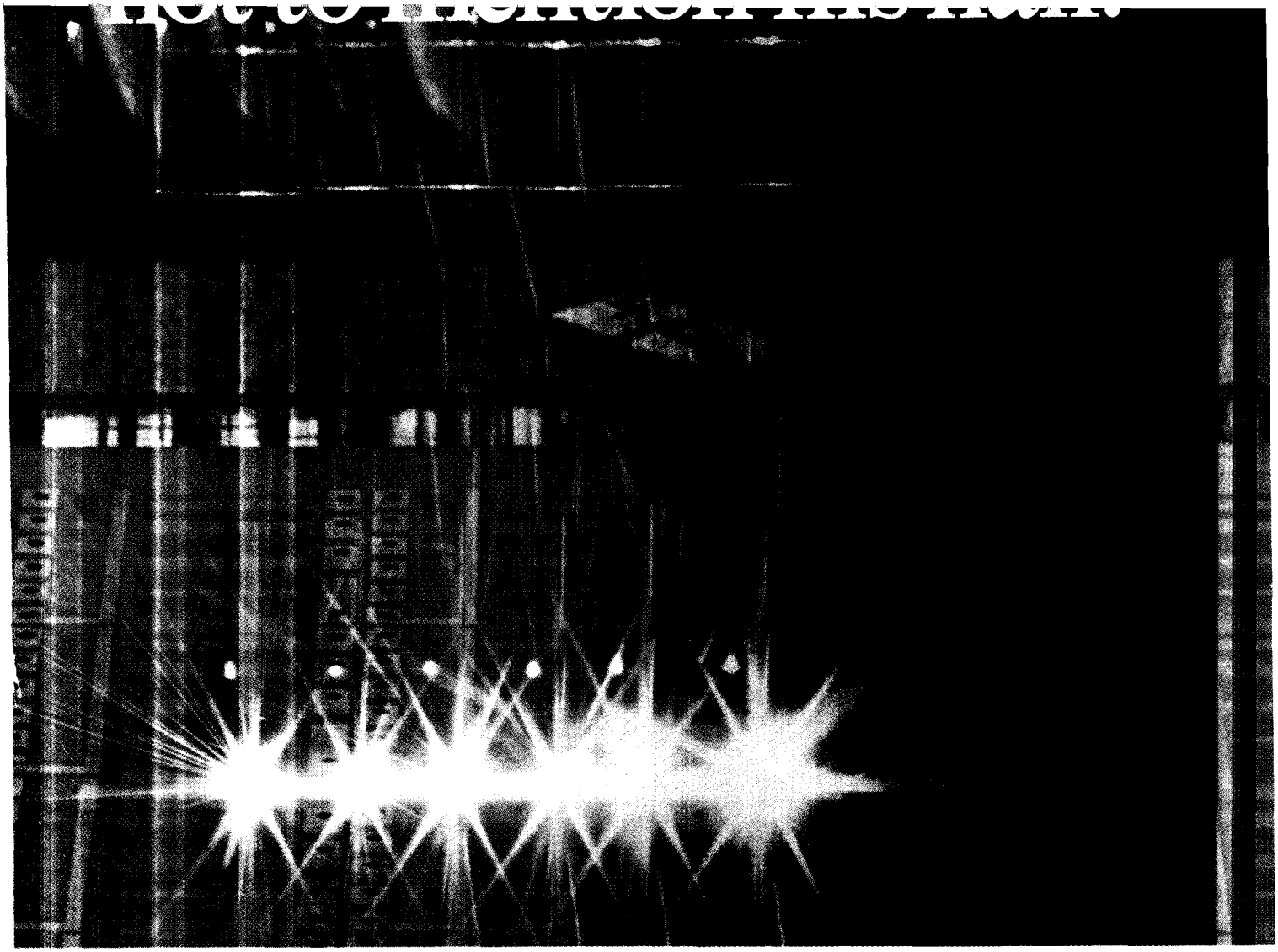

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